

9



Domestic Girlfriend

KEI SASUGA

DOMEX GIRL

Domestic Girlfriend

9

D O M E
G I R L

KEI SASUGA

D O M E G I R L

9

CONTENTS

CH.75	CONTEST	3
CH.76	CONCLUSION	21
CH.77	REUNION	39
CH.78	WAVERING DETERMINATION	56
CH.79	BUDDING FEELINGS?	77
CH.80	MOMO AND RITSU (PART ONE)	95
CH.81	MOMO AND RITSU (PART TWO)	113
CH.82	WHAT'S IMPORTANT	131
CH.83	UNCOVERED FEELINGS	149
CH.84	SWEETHEART	169
EXTRA	SWEET HOME MAGIC	187



...YOU USED
TO DATE
FROM THIS
SCHOOL, BY
CHANCE?

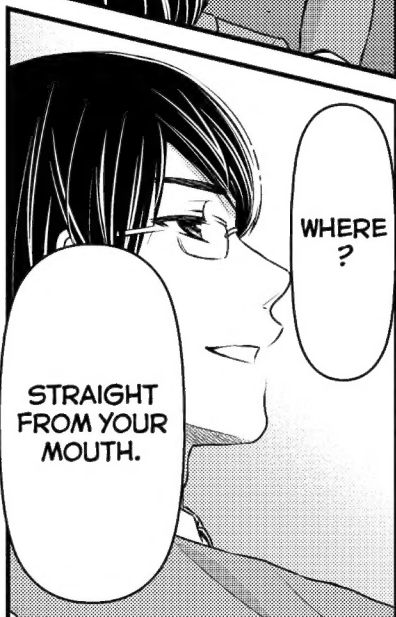
SOME-
ONE...

CHAPTER 75: CONTEST



HUH
?!

YOU HAD A
GIRLFRIEND,
NAT-CHAN?!







INVOLVING
OUR FORTE,
NOVELS.

YES.

A CON-
TEST?



HOWEVER,
THERE'S
NOTHING
EXCITING
ABOUT JUST
COMPARING
OUR
SCORES.

HMM
...

WE'LL BOTH
ENTER A
PIECE, AND
WHOEVER
RANKS
HIGHER
WINS THE
MATCH.

THE AMATEUR
SUBMISSIONS
DEADLINE FOR
THE SPRING
EDITION OF
BUNGEIKATO
IS AT THE END
OF THIS MONTH.



BUT IF
YOU DON'T
ACCEPT MY
CHALLENGE,
I'LL JUST
EXPOSE YOUR
SECRET TO
THE WORLD.

WELL,

IT MAY
SEEM
LIKE I'M
GIVING
YOU AN
OPTION,



WHY
ARE YOU
DOING
THIS?

HANG
ON A
SEC...



LET'S SAY
WHOEVER
LOSES...

...MUST
NEVER
PICK UP
A PEN
AGAIN.



ALL I
COULD
THINK
WAS,

"WHY DID
THIS WIN
FIRST
PRIZE?"

Amateur Division
First Prize

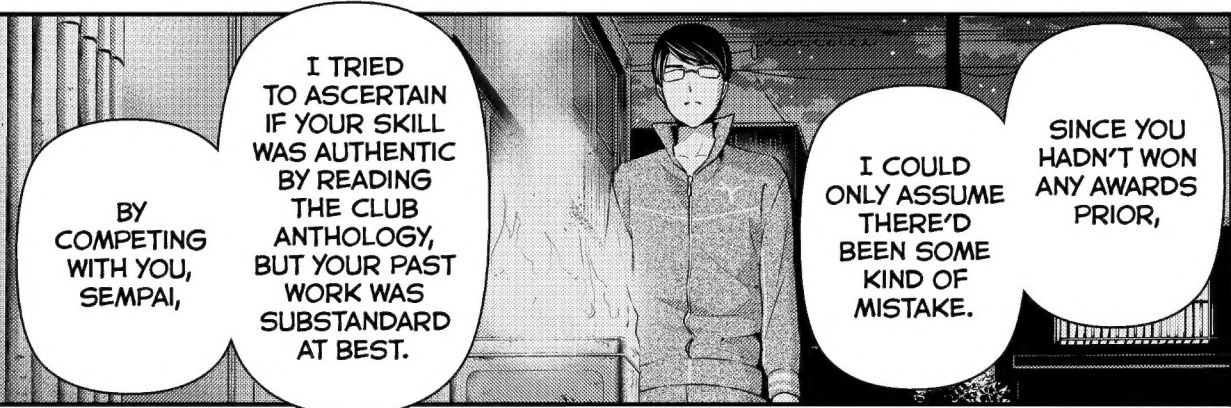
Well, See You.

Natsuo Fujii

I READ
YOUR PIECE
THAT WON
SHINKO-
SHA'S
LITERARY
AWARD...

...IN THE
PUBLISHED
EDITION
OF THE
MAGAZINE.

I JUST
COULDN'T
ACCEPT IT.



BY
COMPETING
WITH YOU,
SEMPAI,

I TRIED
TO ASCERTAIN
IF YOUR SKILL
WAS AUTHENTIC
BY READING
THE CLUB
ANTHOLOGY,
BUT YOUR PAST
WORK WAS
SUBSTANDARD
AT BEST.

I COULD
ONLY ASSUME
THERE'D
BEEN SOME
KIND OF
MISTAKE.

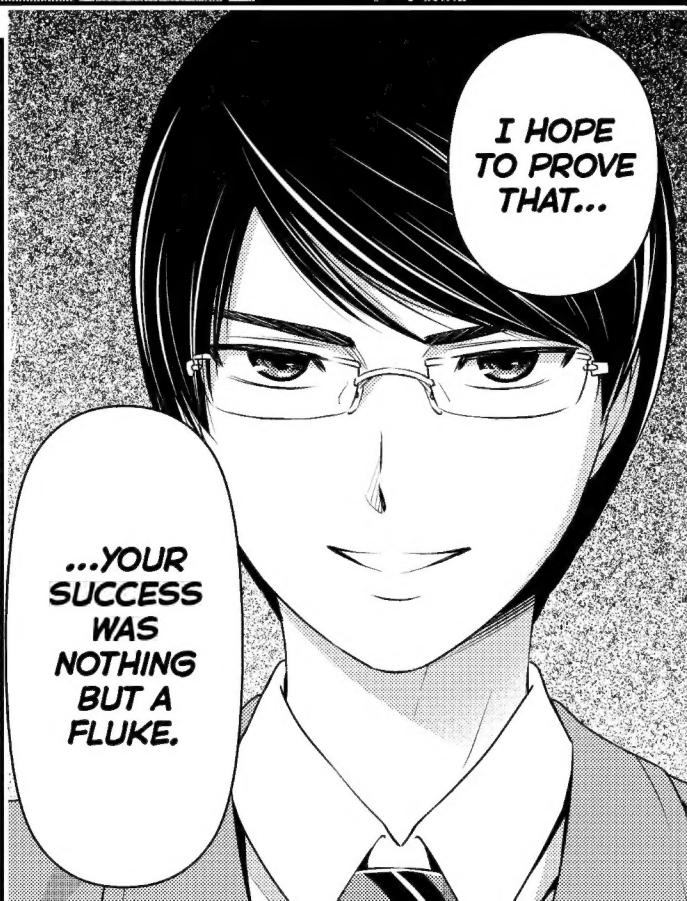
SINCE YOU
HADN'T WON
ANY AWARDS
PRIOR,



WHAT'S
GOING ON
HERE?

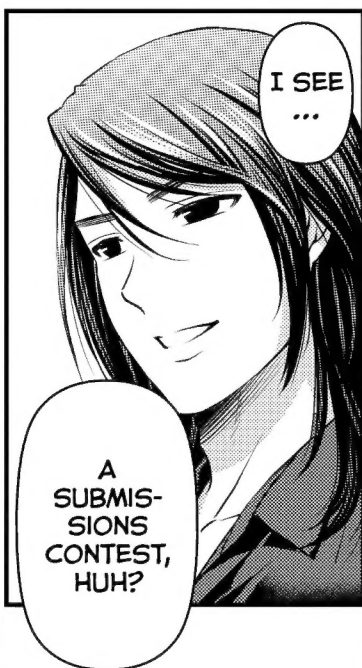
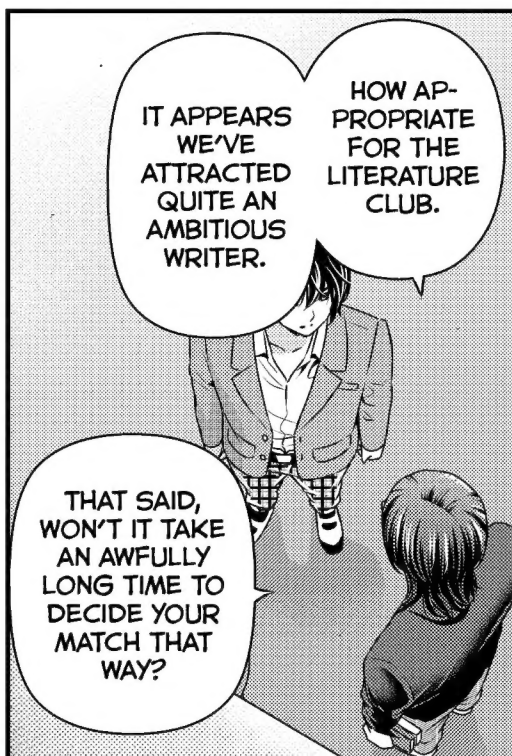


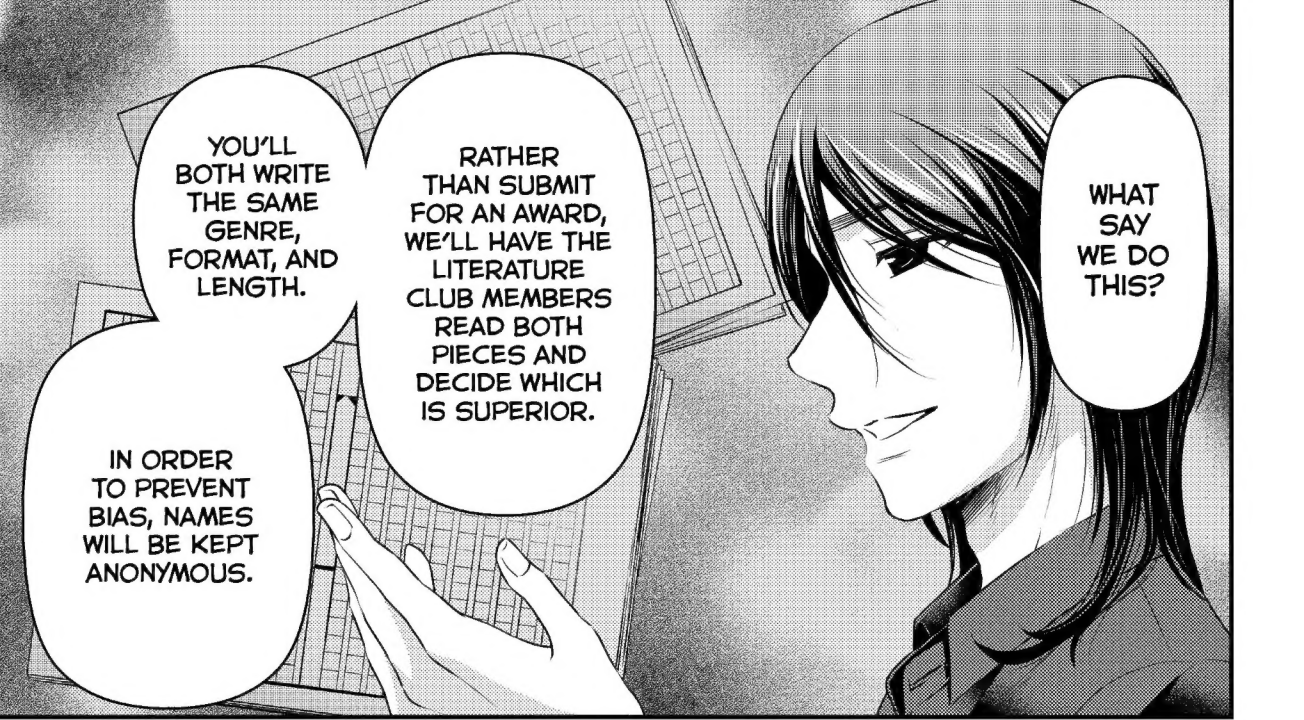
...



I HOPE
TO PROVE
THAT...

...YOUR
SUCCESS
WAS
NOTHING
BUT A
FLUKE.





YOU'LL
BOTH WRITE
THE SAME
GENRE,
FORMAT, AND
LENGTH.

RATHER
THAN SUBMIT
FOR AN AWARD,
WE'LL HAVE THE
LITERATURE
CLUB MEMBERS
READ BOTH
PIECES AND
DECIDE WHICH
IS SUPERIOR.

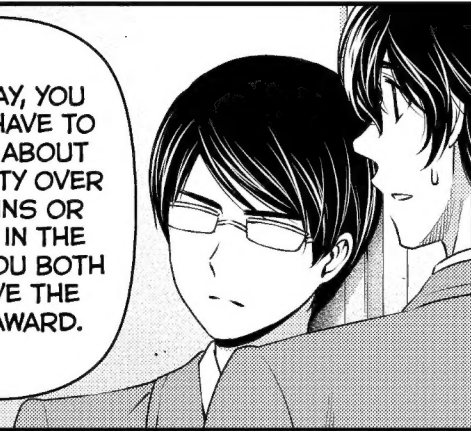
WHAT
SAY
WE DO
THIS?

IN ORDER
TO PREVENT
BIAS, NAMES
WILL BE KEPT
ANONYMOUS.



SOUND
GOOD?

THIS WAY, YOU
WON'T HAVE TO
WORRY ABOUT
AMBIGUITY OVER
WHO WINS OR
LOSES IN THE
EVENT YOU BOTH
RECEIVE THE
SAME AWARD.

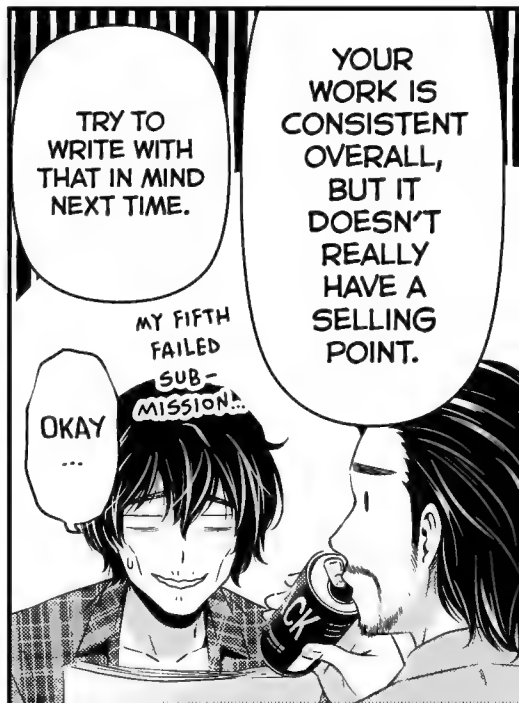
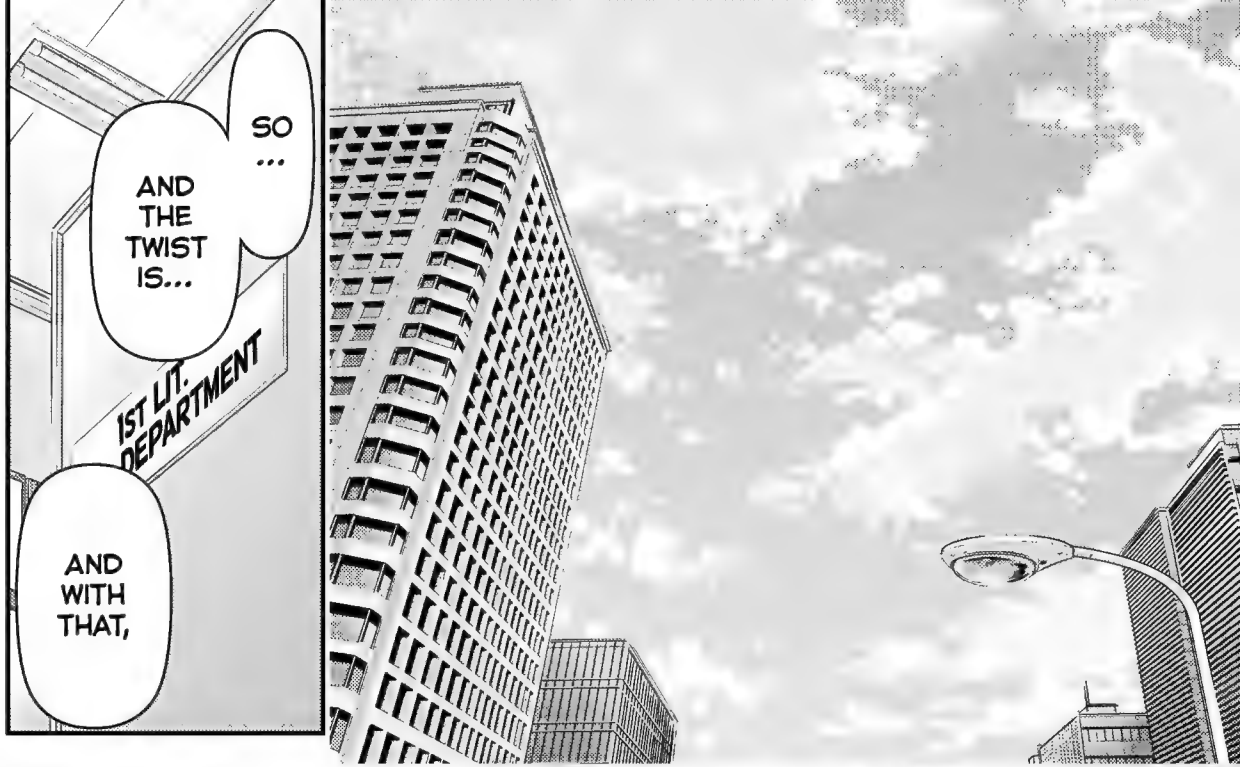


WHILE
THEY AREN'T
PROFESSIONAL
JUDGES, OUR
MEMBERS
ARE ALL AVID
READERS
AND YOUR
SO-CALLED
"TARGET
AUDIENCE."



WELL
...

AS LONG
AS THE
CONTEST
IS FAIR...





SOUNDS FUN!

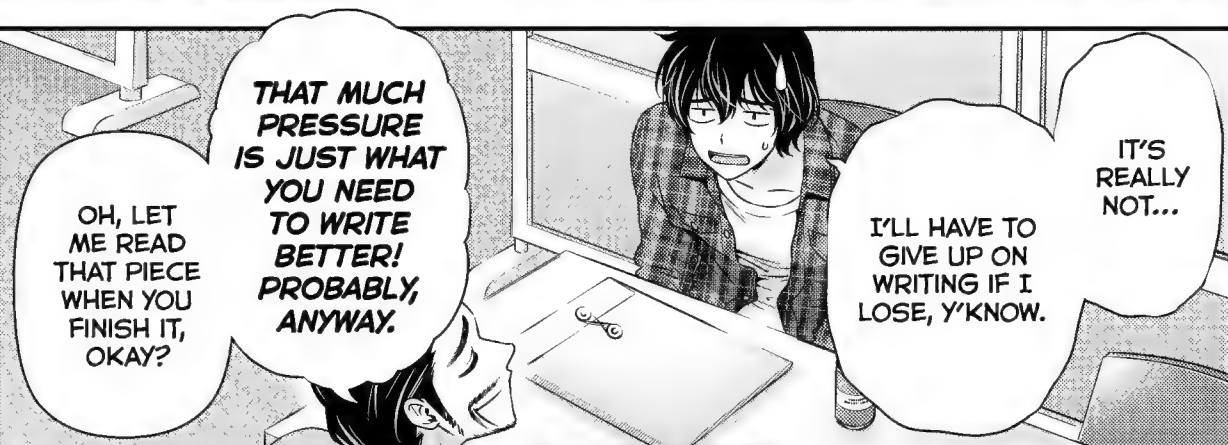
OOH!

A LITERARY SHOWDOWN, HUH?!

BLAH
BLAH
YADDA
YADDA

NO.

SOME-
THING
JUST
CAME UP
WITH MY
CLUB...



OH, LET
ME READ
THAT PIECE
WHEN YOU
FINISH IT,
OKAY?

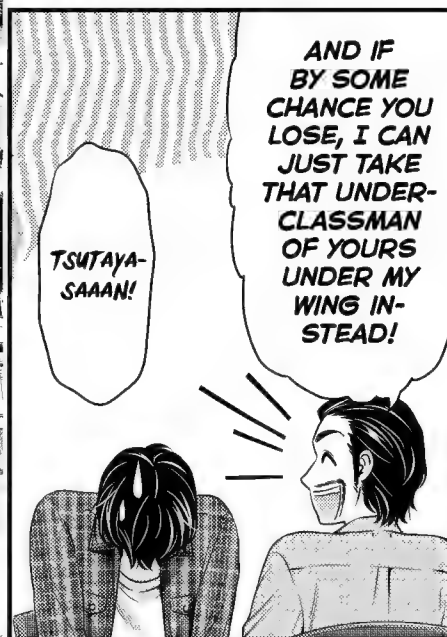
THAT MUCH
PRESSURE
IS JUST WHAT
YOU NEED
TO WRITE
BETTER!
PROBABLY,
ANYWAY.

I'LL HAVE TO
GIVE UP ON
WRITING IF I
LOSE, Y'KNOW.

IT'S
REALLY
NOT...



THIS
SUCKS
...



TSUTAYA-
SAAAN!

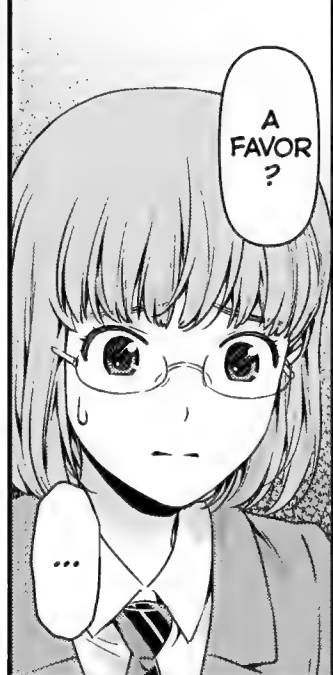
AND IF
BY SOME
CHANCE YOU
LOSE, I CAN
JUST TAKE
THAT UNDER-
CLASSMAN
OF YOURS
UNDER MY
WING IN-
STEAD!





IT'S
ABOUT
...

...YOUR
NOVEL
BATTLE
WITH
SHIBASAKI-
KUN.



A
FAVOR
?

...



YES
...

ACTU-
ALLY,

I HAVE
...

A FAVOR
TO ASK,
SEMPAI.



HUH
?!

I'M SORRY!
I UNDERSTAND
THAT WHAT
I'M ASKING IS
INCREDIBLY
RUDE, BUT...!



BUT
WHY?

I DON'T
FOLLOW
...



IS
THERE
ANY
WAY...

...I CAN
GET YOU TO
THROW THE
MATCH?



HON-
ESTLY,

AND I
THINK
YOU
SHOULD.

I THINK
YOU'D
BE ABLE
TO JUST
IGNORE
THAT
PROMISE,
SEMPAI.

BUT THE
LOSER HAS
TO PUT THEIR
PEN DOWN
FOR GOOD,
RIGHT?

YOU
DIDN'T
TELL THE
REST
OF US,



SO...

AS THE ONE
WHO SUGGEST-
ED IT, HIS PRIDE
WILL PROBABLY
KEEP HIM FROM
WRITING EVER
AGAIN.

BUT I
DOUBT
SHIBASAKI-
KUN WILL
...



I WON'T
FORCE YOU
TO TALK IF
YOU DON'T
WANT TO.

...



...CLASS-
MATES WITH
SHIBASAKI-
KUN IN
GRADE
SCHOOL.

I
WAS
...



YOU
SAY THAT,
KABASAWA-
SAN?

WHAT
MAKES
...



UPON ENTERING MIDDLE SCHOOL, HE ENROLLED IN A PRESTIGIOUS PRIVATE SCHOOL.

EVEN MY PARENTS TOLD ME I SHOULD, "AIM TO BE AS SMART AS SUBARU-KUN."

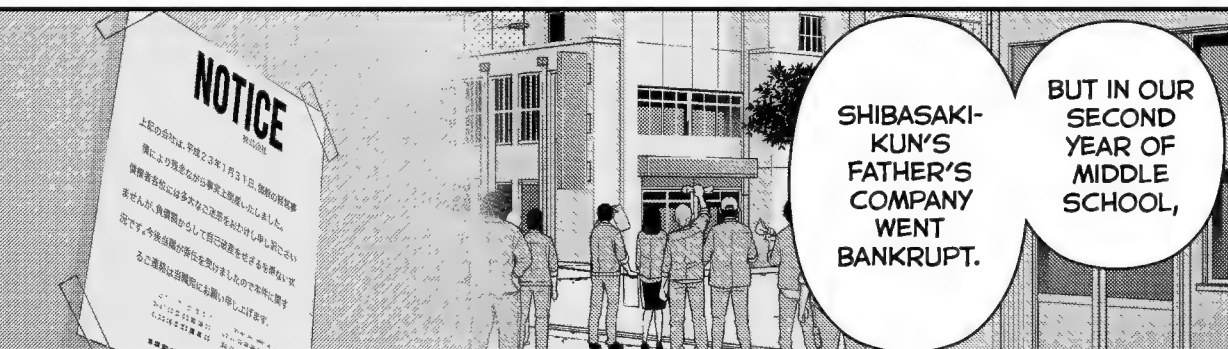


HE WAS POPULAR WITH EVERYONE.

PEOPLE EXPECTED HIM TO BECOME A FAMOUS AUTHOR OR CEO SOMEDAY.

WAS A SMART, CHEERFUL BOY FROM A WELL-OFF FAMILY, AND A GOOD WRITER, TOO.

SHIBASAKI-KUN ...



NOTICE

SHIBASAKI-KUN'S FATHER'S COMPANY WENT BANKRUPT.

BUT IN OUR SECOND YEAR OF MIDDLE SCHOOL,



IT SEEMED PEOPLE HAD TURNED ON HIM PRETTY BADLY AT HIS OLD SCHOOL.

HE KEPT UP HIS HOBBY OF WRITING, BUT...



...BUT IT WAS LIKE HE'D BECOME A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT PERSON.



SHIBASAKI-KUN TRANSFERRED TO THE SAME MIDDLE SCHOOL AS ME IN OUR THIRD YEAR.

DUE TO THE HIGH TUITION AT HIS PRIVATE SCHOOL,

ALL OUR OLD CLASSMATES WERE LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING HIM AGAIN...

HE SUBMIT-
TED FOR
AWARD AFTER
AWARD AS IF
CONSUMED
BY VEN-
GEANCE.

INCLUDING
THE AWARD
YOU WON,
SEMPAI...

Shinkosha
Literary Award

I'LL SHOW
ALL THOSE
PEOPLE WHO
TREATED ME
LIKE A FOOL!

I REFUSE TO
END UP LIKE
MY DAD!

IT'S THE
ONE THING
KEEPING HIM
TOGETHER.

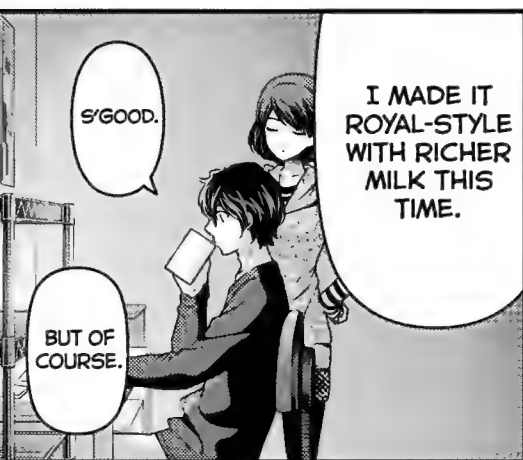
THAT'S HOW
STRONG
HIS OBSES-
SION WITH
NOVELS IS.

HE JUST
COULDN'T
ACCEPT THAT
HIS EFFORTS
WEREN'T
REWARDED.

HE MUST
HAVE BEEN
SO FRUS-
TRATED TO
PICK A FIGHT
WITH YOU
LIKE THIS.

THEN HE
WON'T
HAVE
ANYTHING
LEFT!

IF YOU
TAKE
AWAY
WRITING
FROM
HIM,
TOO,







IF THINGS
GET OVER-
WHELMING,

I'LL BE
THERE TO
HELP.



DON'T TRY TO
SHOULDER
EVERYTHING
BY YOURSELF,
OKAY?



THANKS.

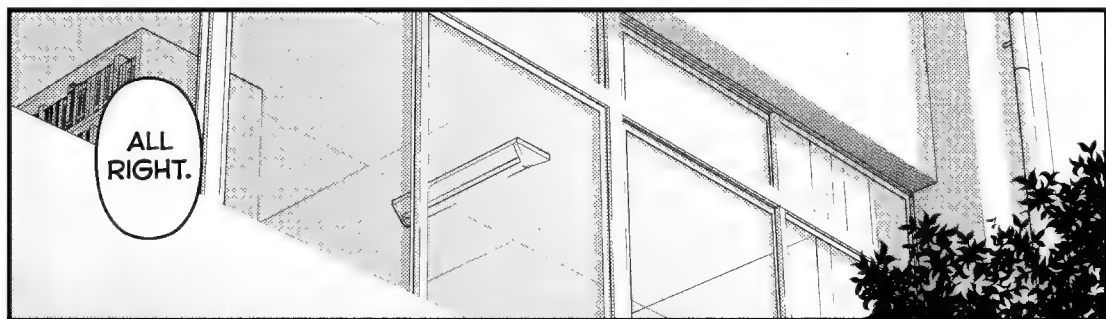
...
SURE.





THE
DAY
OF THE
VOTE



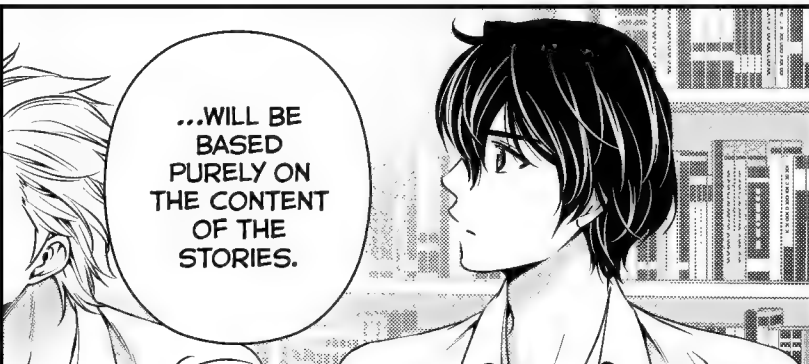




NEEDLESS
TO SAY,
NAMES HAVE
BEEN KEPT
ANONYMOUS,
SO THEY DO
NOT KNOW
WHO WROTE
WHICH PIECE.

WERE GIVEN
COPIES OF
THE WORKS
SUBMITTED
BY OUR TWO
CONTESTANTS
THIS MORNING
TO BE READ
DURING BREAKS
BETWEEN
CLASSES.

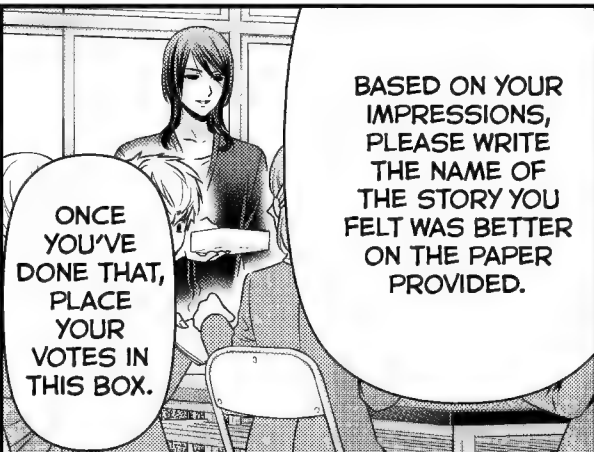
THE CLUB
MEMBERS,
ALL OF WHOM
HAVE AGREED
TO ACT AS
JUDGES,



...WILL BE
BASED
PURELY ON
THE CONTENT
OF THE
STORIES.



THE
JUDGING
...



ONCE
YOU'VE
DONE THAT,
PLACE
YOUR
VOTES IN
THIS BOX.

BASED ON YOUR
IMPRESSIONS,
PLEASE WRITE
THE NAME OF
THE STORY YOU
FELT WAS BETTER
ON THE PAPER
PROVIDED.



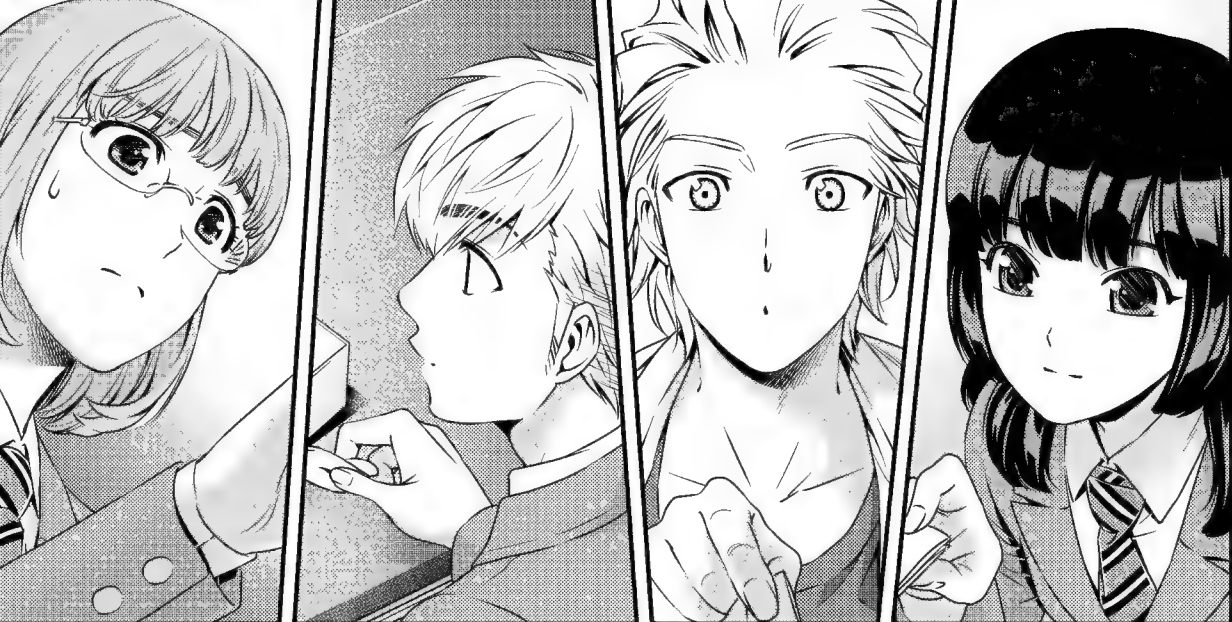
**THEY
WERE
NEAT!**

THE
GENRE
WAS
SCI-FI,

AND THE
RULES
CALLED
FOR SHORT
STORIES
NO LONGER
THAN 5,000
WORDS.



I FELT
LIKE I WAS
TRANSPORTED
TO THE
FUTURE.





OH, I SEE.
I WAS JUST
WONDERING,
SINCE THE
STORY'S
SETTING
WAS SO
DETAILED.

NO, NOT
PARTICU-
LARLY.

DO YOU
WRITE
SCI-FI
A LOT,
SHIBASAKI-
KUN?

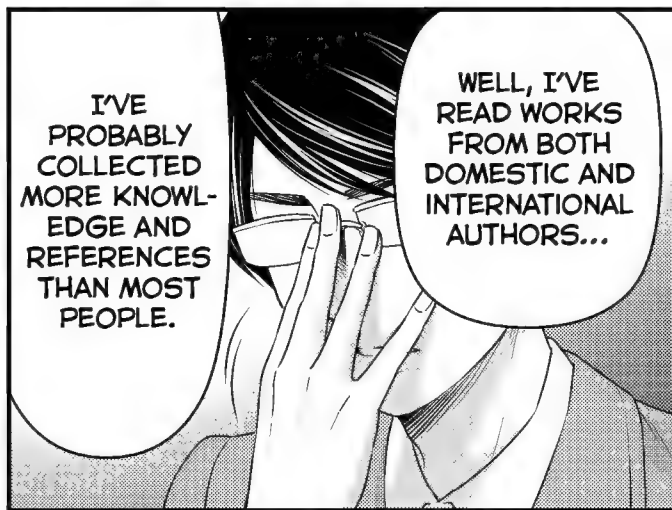
HUH
...

BOTH
SURPRIS-
ING AND
NOT AT
THE SAME
TIME...



UNLIKE
SOMEONE
WHO CAN
CAN'T WRITE
ANYTHING
OUT OF THE
ORDINARY...

AHH.



I'VE
PROBABLY
COLLECTED
MORE KNOW-
LEDGE AND
REFERENCES
THAN MOST
PEOPLE.

WELL, I'VE
READ WORKS
FROM BOTH
DOMESTIC AND
INTERNATIONAL
AUTHORS...



RSTL
+
+
...



ALL
RIGHT.

WE'LL
TALLY
THE
VOTES
NOW.



BUT OF COURSE.



SQUEAK

"The Rules of Interstellar Warfare"
Subaru Shibasaki

THE RULES OF INTERSTELLAR WARFARE,

SHIBASAKI-KUN.

おっおっおっ



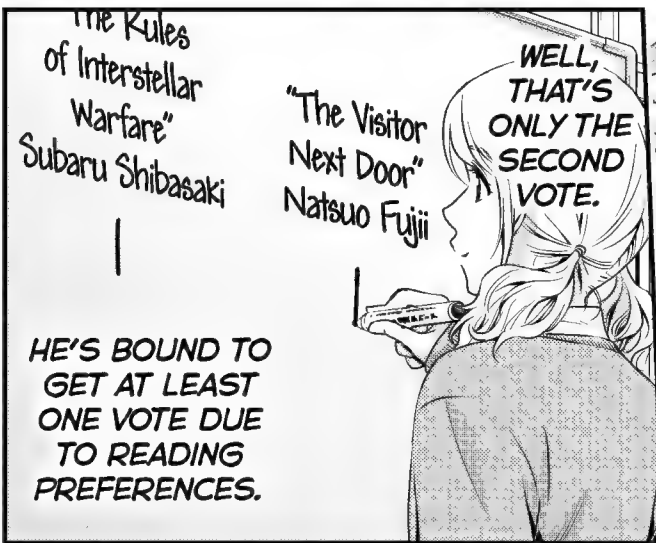
I'LL SHOW YOU...

...JUST HOW MUCH OF A GAP THERE IS BETWEEN OUR SKILLS!



MY STORY'S ELABORATE DESCRIPTIONS AND CONVINCING TONE ARE THE VERY ESSENCE OF SCI-FI.

ON THE OTHER HAND, HIS STORY WAS JUST A BENIGN SLICE-OF-LIFE FANTASY WITH SOME SCI-FI ELEMENTS MIXED IN.



THE
VISITOR
NEXT
DOOR,

The Visitor
Next Door
Natsuo Fujii

WELL,
THAT'S
ONLY THE
SECOND
VOTE.

NATSUO
FUJII.

THE
VISITOR
NEXT
DOOR,

NATSUO
FUJII.

FROM HERE ON
OUT, HE WON'T
BE ABLE TO
TOUCH ME.





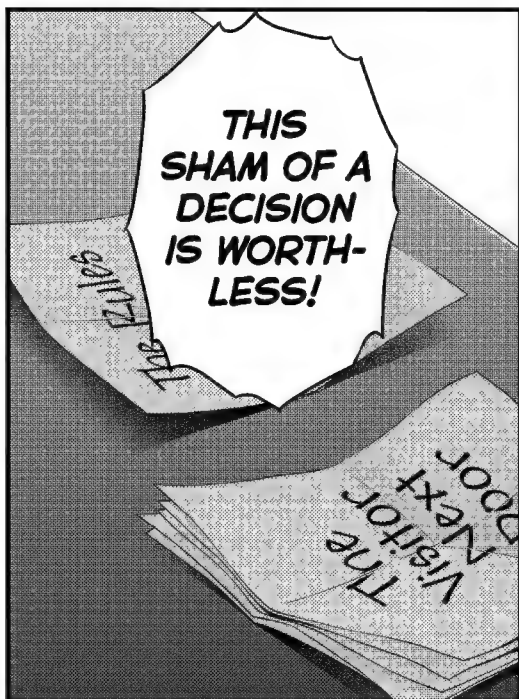
I DIDN'T
SEE NAT-
CHAN AT
ALL TODAY
BEFORE
COMING
HERE.

WE
HONESTLY
DIDN'T
KNOW ANY-
THING...

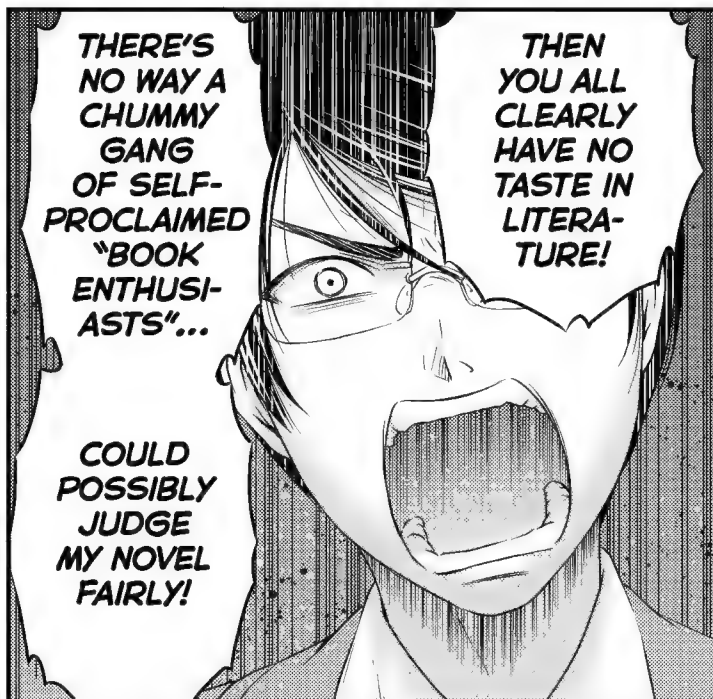
†
RSTL††

THE
VISITOR
NEXT
DOOR,
NATSUO
FUJII.

...



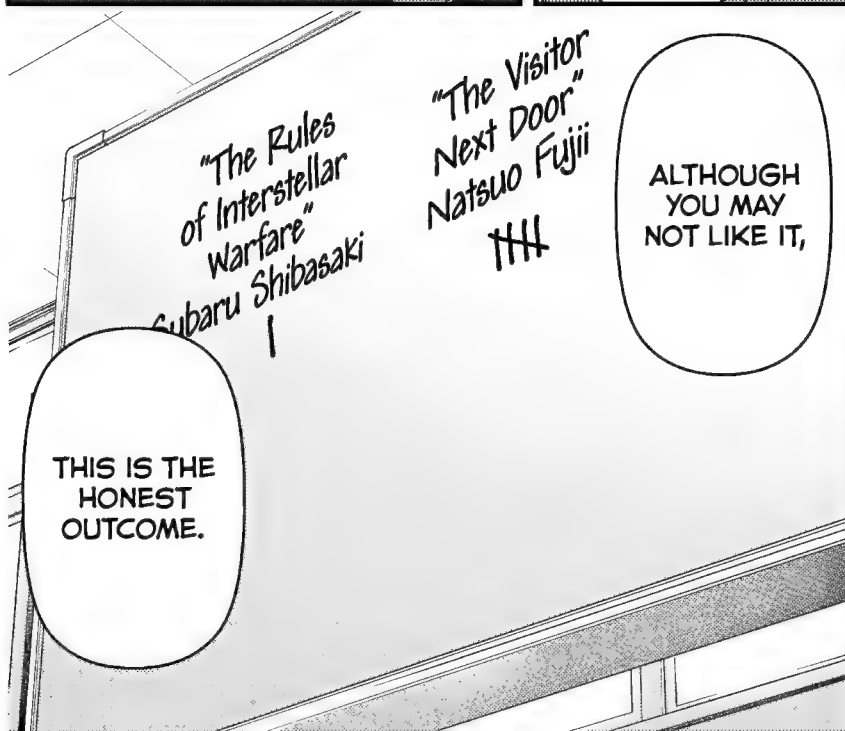
THIS
SHAM OF A
DECISION
IS WORTH-
LESS!



THERE'S
NO WAY A
CHUMMY
GANG
OF SELF-
PROCLAIMED
"BOOK
ENTHUSI-
ASTS"...

THEN
YOU ALL
CLEARLY
HAVE NO
TASTE IN LITER-
TURE!

COULD
POSSIBLY
JUDGE
MY NOVEL
FAIRLY!



"The Rules
of Interstellar
Warfare"
Subaru Shibasaki
I

"The Visitor
Next Door"
Natsuo Fujii
III

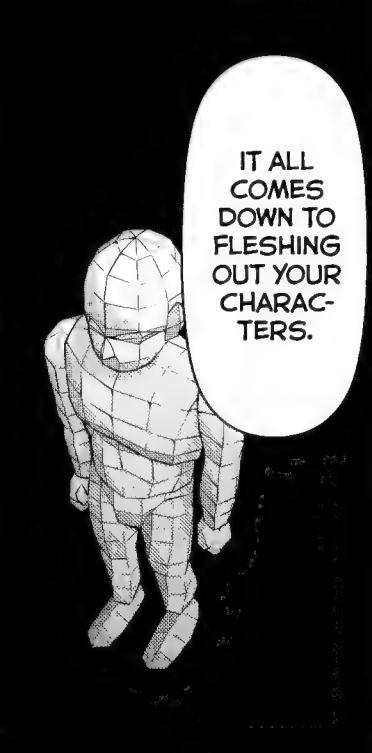
THIS IS THE
HONEST
OUTCOME.

ALTHOUGH
YOU MAY
NOT LIKE IT,



ARE YOU
FINISHED?

...



IT ALL
COMES
DOWN TO
FLESHING
OUT YOUR
CHARAC-
TERS.

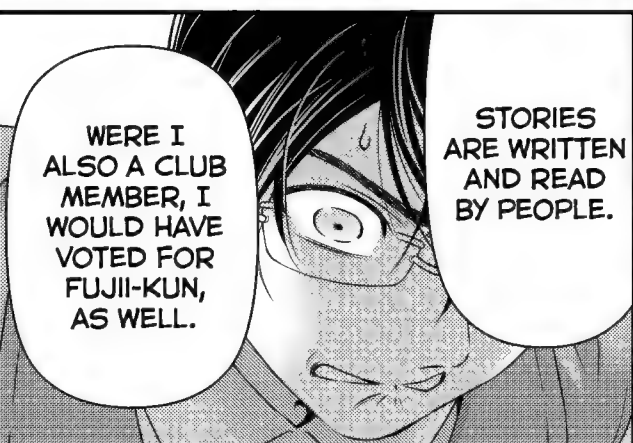


THOUGH
YOU
CALLED
IT A
SHAM,

I CAN'T
HELP BUT
AGREE
WITH THE
RESULTS.

THERE
WERE NO
MESSAGES
HIDDEN IN
THE MAN-
USCRIPTS,
NOR ANY
TAMPERING
WITH THE
VOTES.

THE
CONTEST
WAS HELD
FAIR AND
SQUARE.



WERE I
ALSO A CLUB
MEMBER, I
WOULD HAVE
VOTED FOR
FUJII-KUN,
AS WELL.

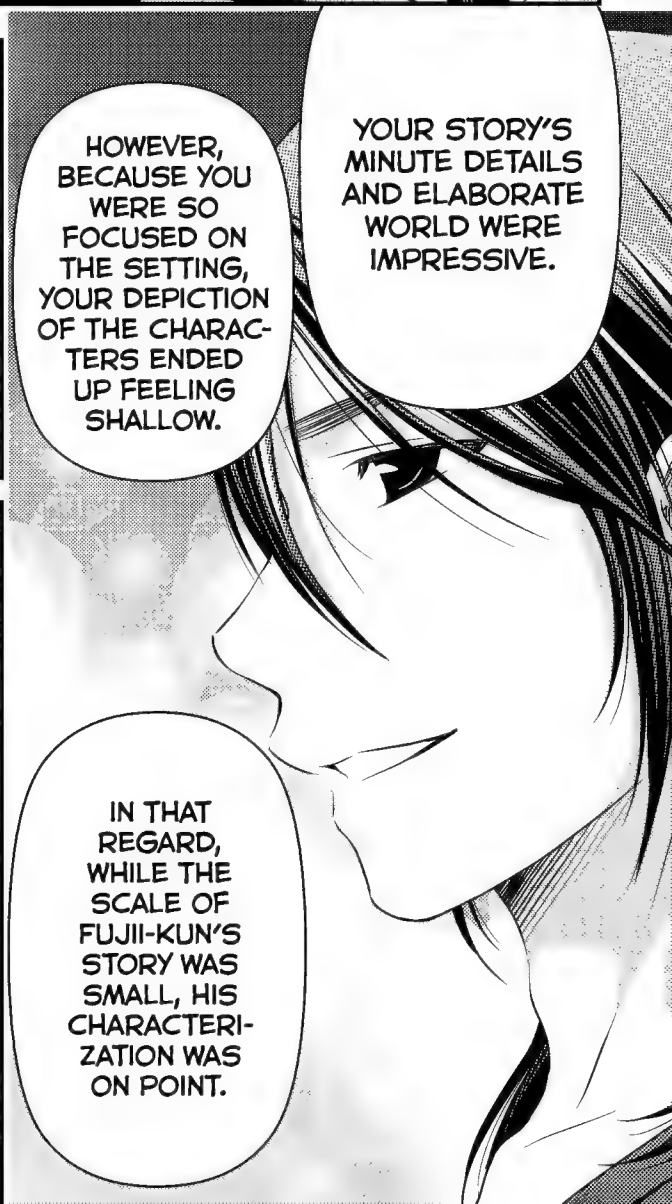
STORIES
ARE WRITTEN
AND READ
BY PEOPLE.



HAH!

BIG TALK,
COMING
FROM A
LOWLY
JAPANESE
TEACHER.

WHAT
DO YOU
KNOW
ABOUT
LITERA-
TURE?!



HOWEVER,
BECAUSE YOU
WERE SO
FOCUSED ON
THE SETTING,
YOUR DEPICTION
OF THE CHARAC-
TERS ENDED
UP FEELING
SHALLOW.

YOUR STORY'S
MINUTE DETAILS
AND ELABORATE
WORLD WERE
IMPRESSIVE.

IN THAT
REGARD,
WHILE THE
SCALE OF
FUJII-KUN'S
STORY WAS
SMALL, HIS
CHARACTERI-
ZATION WAS
ON POINT.





OH.

YEAH.

"The Rules
Interstellar
Warfare"
Iru Shiba

Visitor
por"
Fujii

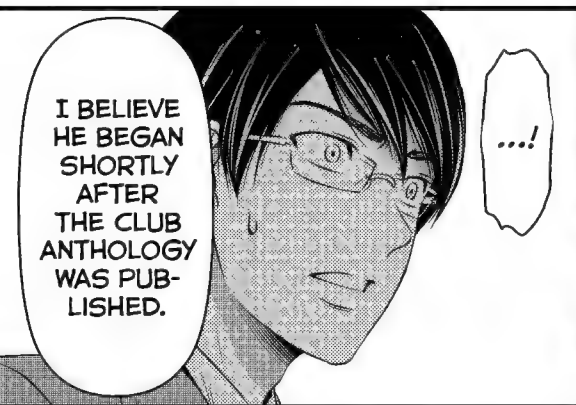
FUJII-KUN,
DID YOU
BRING WHAT
I ASKED
YOU TO?



FUMP

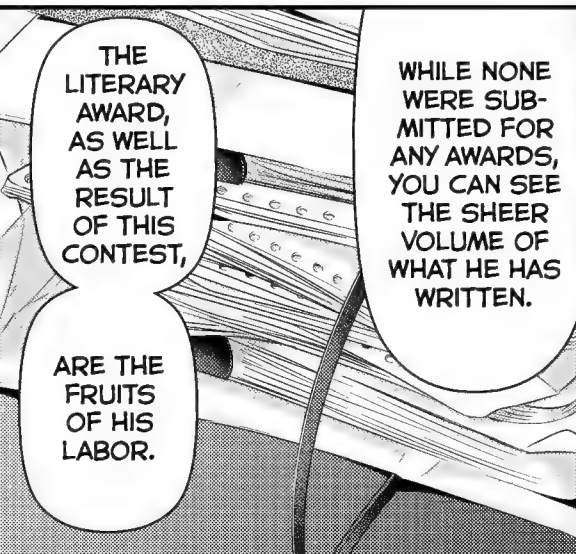


THEY WEIGH
A TON, SO
I'VE BEEN
BRINGING
THEM IN
BATCHES
THE PAST
FEW DAYS.



I BELIEVE
HE BEGAN
SHORTLY
AFTER
THE CLUB
ANTHOLOGY
WAS PUB-
LISHED.

...!



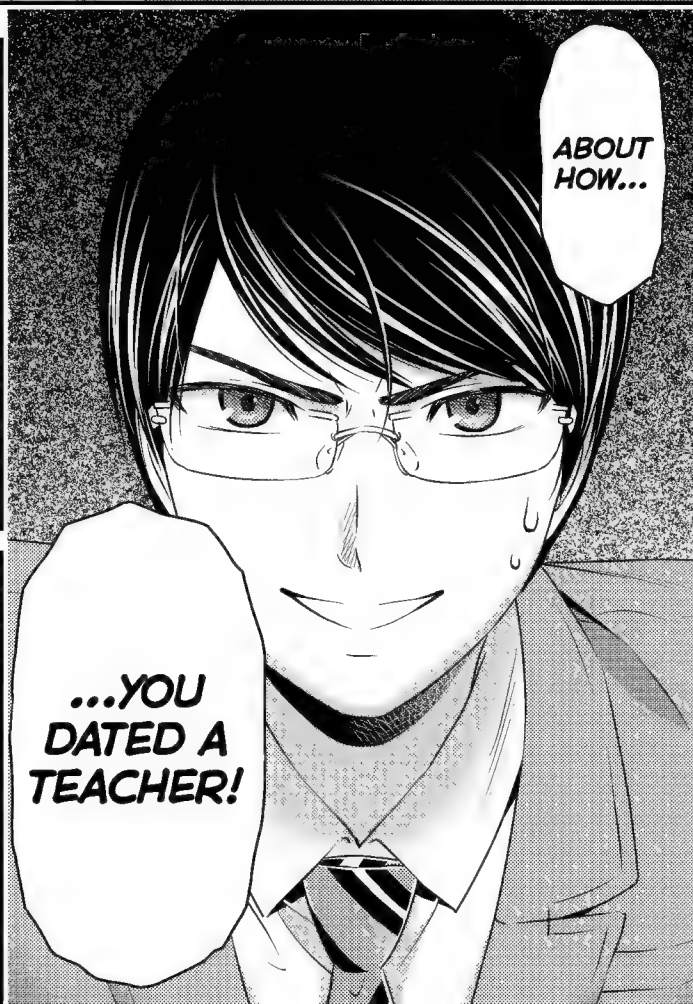
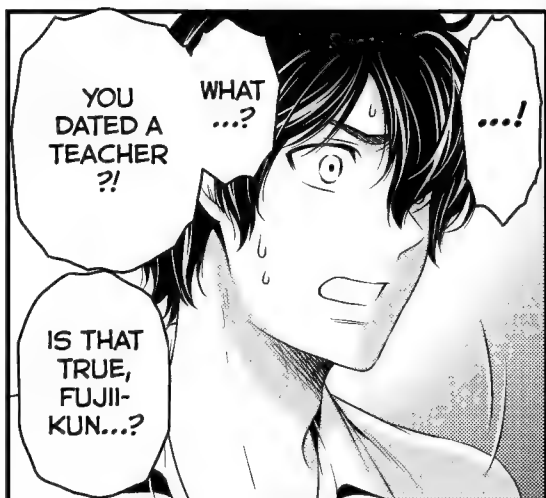
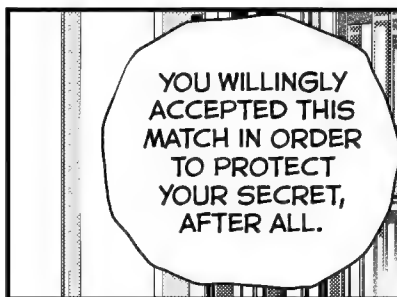
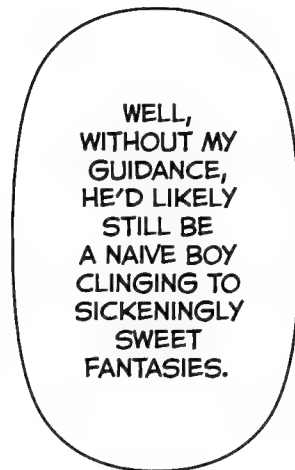
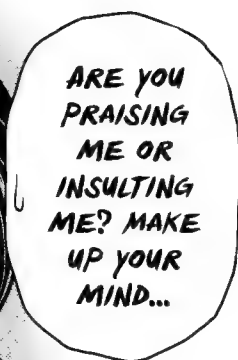
THE
LITERARY
AWARD,
AS WELL
AS THE
RESULT
OF THIS
CONTEST,

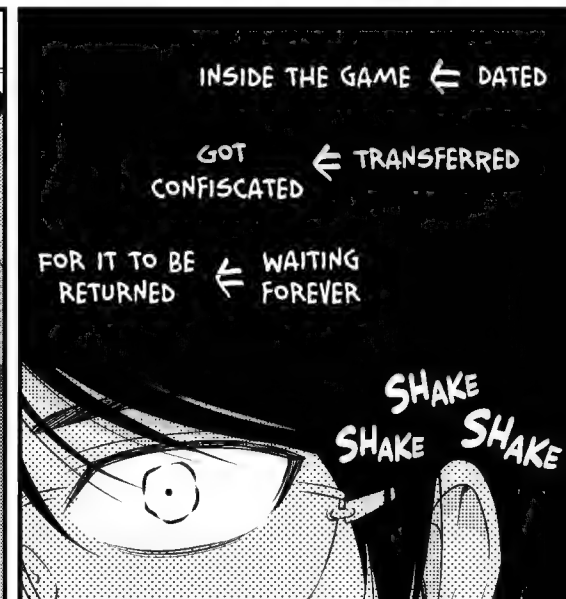
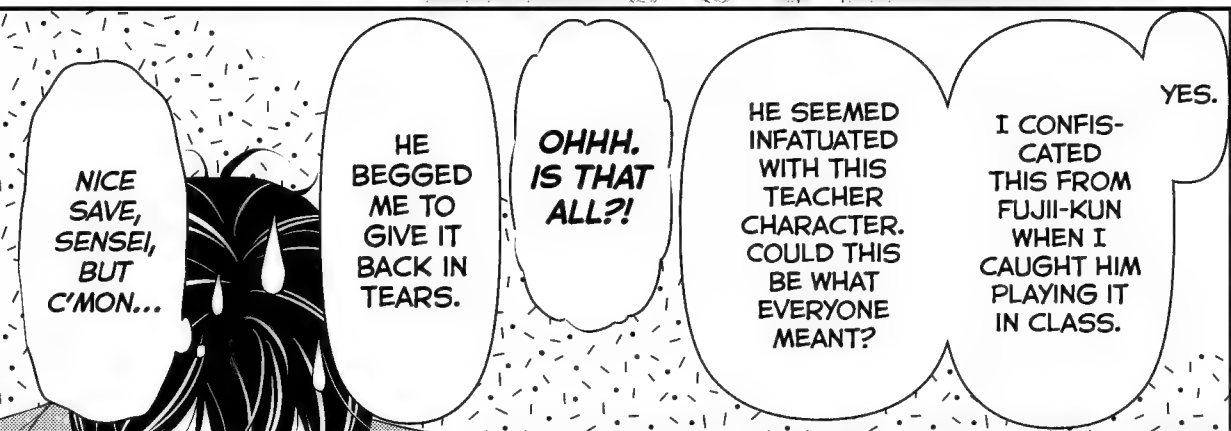
ARE THE
FRUITS
OF HIS
LABOR.

WHILE NONE
WERE SUB-
MITTED FOR
ANY AWARDS,
YOU CAN SEE
THE SHEER
VOLUME OF
WHAT HE HAS
WRITTEN.



THESE
ARE ALL THE
SHORT STORIES
FUJII-KUN HAS
BEEN WRITING
SINCE FALL OF
LAST YEAR.







NOW THAT
I'VE WON AND
HAVE NOTHING
TO FEAR
ANYMORE, I'LL
DECIDE YOUR
FATE.

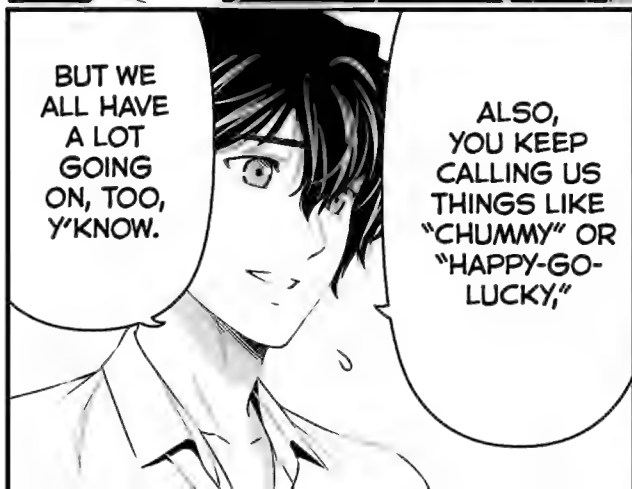
THE
CONDITION
WAS THAT THE
LOSER HAS
TO GIVE UP
WRITING,

BUT THAT
WAS TOO
ONE-SIDED.



YOUR
PUNISH-
MENT...

...IS TO
JOIN THE
LITERATURE
CLUB.



BUT WE
ALL HAVE
A LOT
GOING
ON, TOO,
Y'KNOW.

ALSO,
YOU KEEP
CALLING US
THINGS LIKE
"CHUMMY" OR
"HAPPY-GO-
LUCKY,"



I'M SURE
IT'LL SPICE
THINGS UP
AROUND
HERE IF A
SKILLED
WRITER LIKE
YOU JOINS.

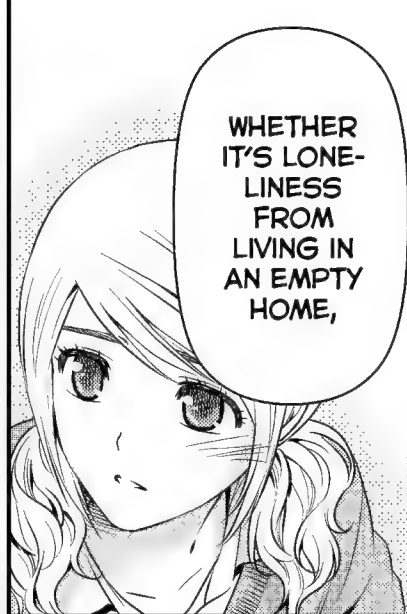
HUH
?



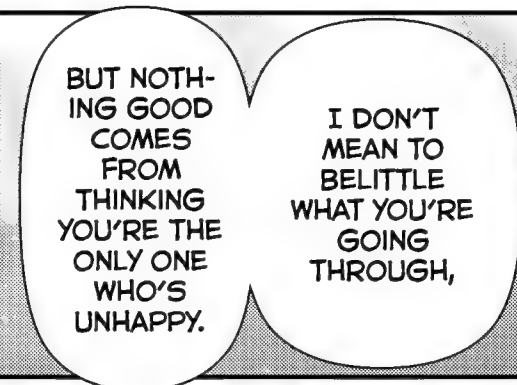
OR FRUSTRATION
FROM NEVER
HAVING YOUR
HARD WORK
REWARDED.



REGRET
FROM
FAILED
LOVE
ENDEAV-
ORS,

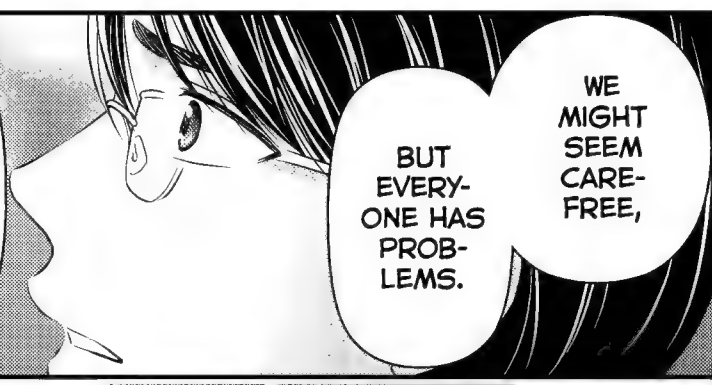


WHETHER
IT'S LONE-
LINESS
FROM
LIVING IN
AN EMPTY
HOME,



BUT NOTH-
ING GOOD
COMES
FROM
THINKING
YOU'RE THE
ONLY ONE
WHO'S
UNHAPPY.

I DON'T
MEAN TO
BELITTLE
WHAT YOU'RE
GOING
THROUGH,



BUT
EVERY-
ONE HAS
PROBL-
EMS.

WE
MIGHT
SEEM
CARE-
FREE,



...



IF YOU
SPEND
MORE
TIME WITH
PEOPLE
INSTEAD OF
ISOLATING
YOURSELF,

I THINK
YOU'LL BE
ABLE TO
WRITE EVEN
BETTER
STORIES,
TOO.





BY THE WAY, SENSEI.

DID YOU ...

WHO'D HAVE THOUGHT SOMETHING I CONFISCATED FROM ANOTHER STUDENT WOULD COME IN HANDY LIKE THIS?

NO PROBLEM.

THANKS FOR THE HELP.

IT'S ACTUALLY PRETTY FUN.

you PLAYED IT?

...KNOW ABOUT US?

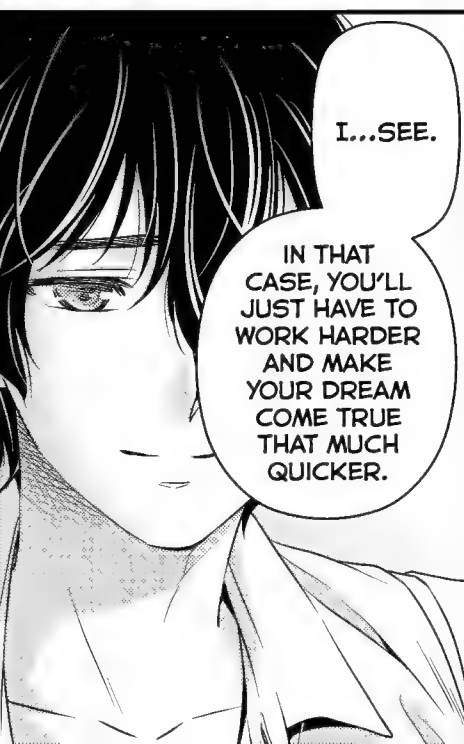


SO I THOUGHT I'D COME UP WITH SOME SORT OF COUNTER-MEASURE.

TRUTH BE TOLD, I OVERHEARD YOU AND SHIBASAKI-KUN ARGUING THAT DAY,

I WAS CONCERNED HOW YOU'D FARE FOLLOWING TACHIBANA-SENSEI'S TRANSFER.

MORE OR LESS.



I...SEE.

IN THAT CASE, YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO WORK HARDER AND MAKE YOUR DREAM COME TRUE THAT MUCH QUICKER.



LEFT WITHOUT TELLING ANYONE TO PROTECT MY DREAM OF BECOMING A NOVELIST.

HINA... TACHIBANA-SENSEI...

THAT'S WHY, I DON'T THINK I SHOULD SEE HER AS I AM NOW...



ANY WORD ON HER WHEREABOUTS SINCE?



BYE.
TAKE CARE.

BYE,
SENSEI!

YES.



WHAT DOES
?

HER
HAIR.

IT ALMOST
FEELS LIKE
A WASTE,
HUH?



I LIKE IT.
I THINK
IT'S A RE-
FRESHING
LOOK FOR
HER.

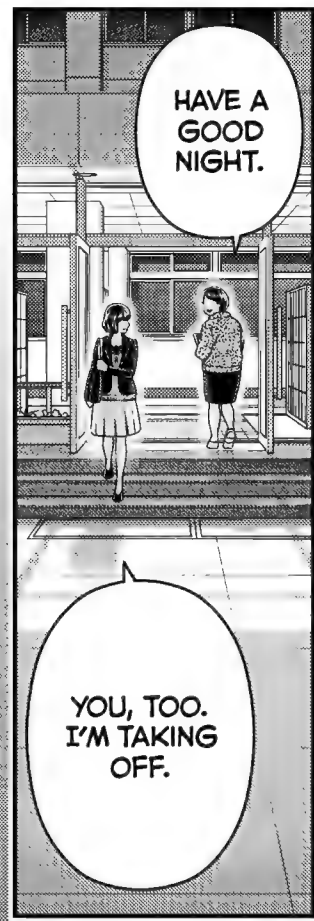
YEAH
?



CHAPTER 77: REUNION



K-SH



HAVE A GOOD NIGHT.

YOU, TOO. I'M TAKING OFF.







I FRANTICALLY CALLED AROUND TO EVERY SCHOOL IN THE CITY,

SINCE I KNEW YOU WERE PROBABLY ALL ALONE.

KIRIYA-SEMPAI TOLD ME YOU WERE TRANSFERRED RIGHT BEFORE WINTER BREAK.

CONSIDERING THE WEIRD TIMING AND THE FACT THAT NOBODY WAS TOLD WHERE YOU WENT, I FIGURED SOMETHING HAD TO HAVE HAPPENED.



YES.

IT'S EXACTLY AS YOU THINK.

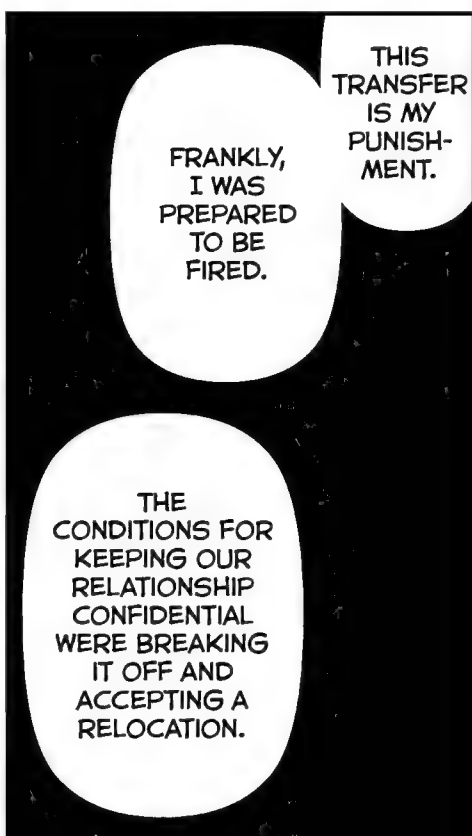
...



DOES IT HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH HIM?

WITH NATSUO-KUN?

WHAT HAPPENED?



FRANKLY, I WAS PREPARED TO BE FIRED.

THIS TRANSFER IS MY PUNISHMENT.

THE CONDITIONS FOR KEEPING OUR RELATIONSHIP CONFIDENTIAL WERE BREAKING IT OFF AND ACCEPTING A RELOCATION.



MY IMMATURETY GOT THE BETTER OF ME...

...AND I ENDED UP GETTING HIM INVOLVED.



...IT'S
OKAY.

YOU
DON'T
...

HAVE TO
FORCE
YOURSELF
TO SMILE.

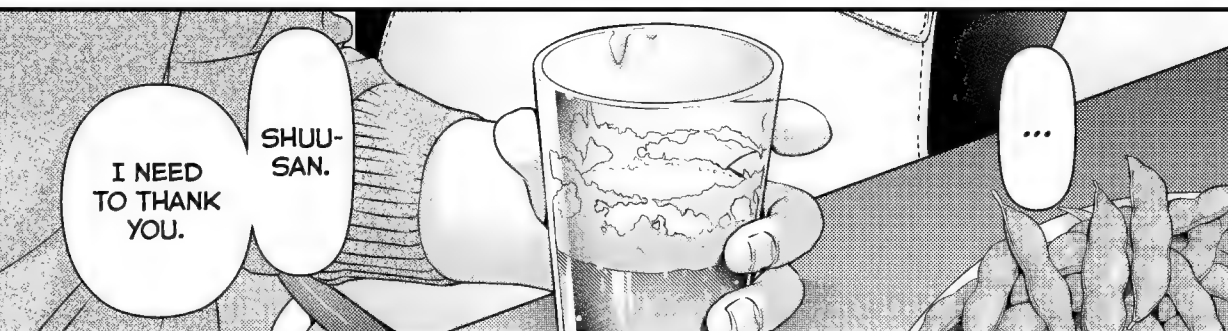


I'M
ACTUALLY
DOING WELL,
ALL THINGS
CONSID-
ERED.

NO NEED
TO WORRY
ABOUT ME.

WHAT,
DID YOU
THINK I
DIED?

AND I
CHANGED
MY
NUMBER,
SO NO
ONE CAN
REACH
ME.



I NEED
TO THANK
YOU.

SHUU-
SAN.

...



I'M
REALLY
GRATE-
FUL.

IF...

IF WE'D
ENDED UP
DATING AT
THE TIME, I
PROBABLY
WOULDN'T
HAVE BEEN
ABLE TO
RESTRAIN
MYSELF,

BUT
BECAUSE
YOU MATURELY
HANDLED THE
SITUATION AS
"HAGIWARA-
SENSEI,"
I'M ABLE TO
WORK AS A
TEACHER
TODAY.

YOU FELT THE
SAME AS I DID
BACK THEN,
DIDN'T YOU?

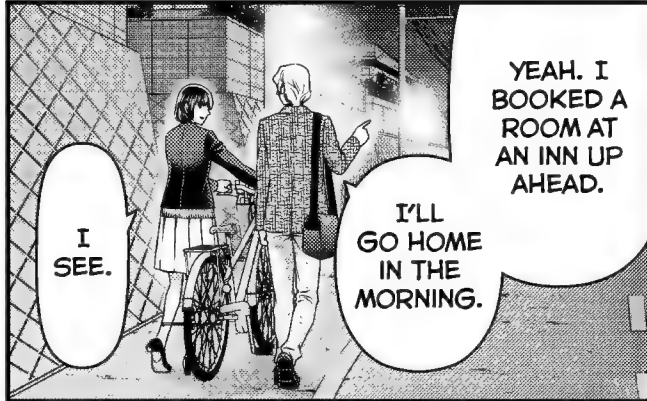
WHEN I
WAS IN
HIGH
SCHOOL,

YOU
KEPT OUR
RELATIONSHIP
THAT OF A
TEACHER AND
STUDENT.



IT'S
GOTTEN
PRETTY
LATE.

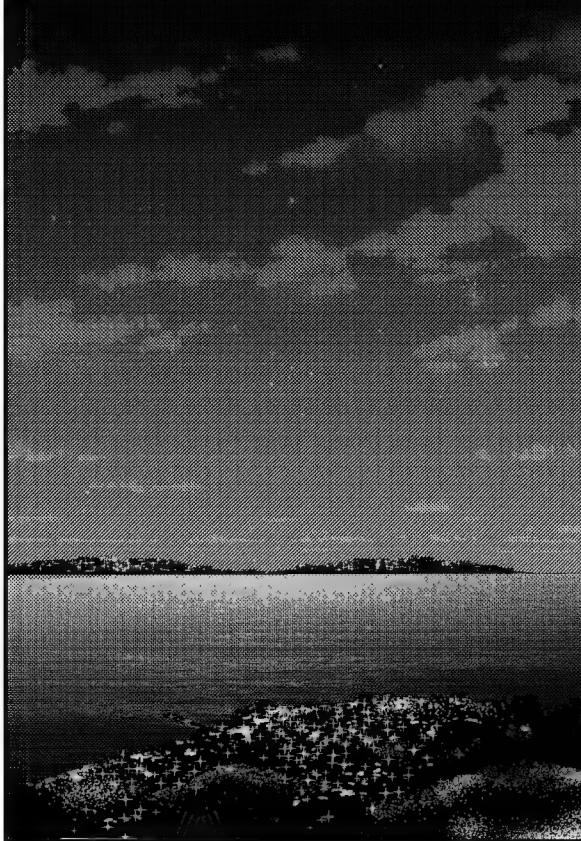
WILL YOU
BE OKAY
GETTING
BACK?



YEAH. I
BOOKED A
ROOM AT
AN INN UP
AHEAD.

I'LL
GO HOME
IN THE
MORNING.

I
SEE.

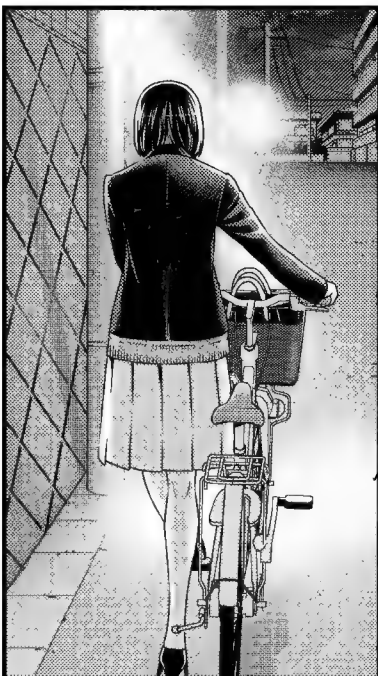


TAKE
CARE,

SHUU-
SAN.



DASH



WELL,
GOOD
NIGHT.

I'M
SORRY
FOR
WORRYING
YOU,

BUT I'M
FINE,
REALLY.





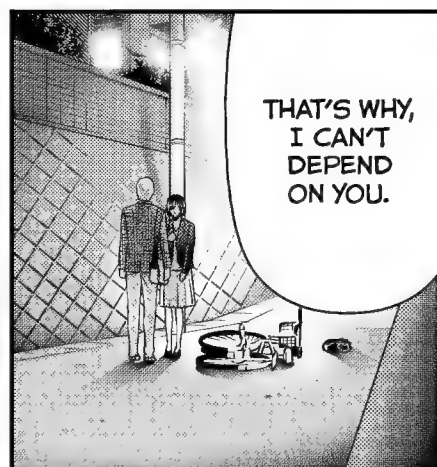
I WANT
TO HELP
YOU IN
ANY WAY
I CAN!



IT'S
OKAY TO
RELY ON
OTHERS
WHEN
THINGS
GET
ROUGH!

WHY
DO YOU
ALWAYS
TRY TO
BEAR
EVERY-
THING BY
YOUR-
SELF?!







SO, SHIBASAKI'S
DAD'S COMPANY
WAS ONE OF YOUR
DAD'S CLIENTS?

HUH
...



I WAS
SURE YOU
LIKED HIM
OR SOME-
THING.

GOTCHA.
I'M GUESSING
YOU'RE ALSO
THE ONE WHO
VOTED FOR
HIM.



OH, YEAH?
WHY ARE YOU
BLUSHING,
THEN?

**N-NO,
IT'S NOT
LIKE THAT
AT ALL!**



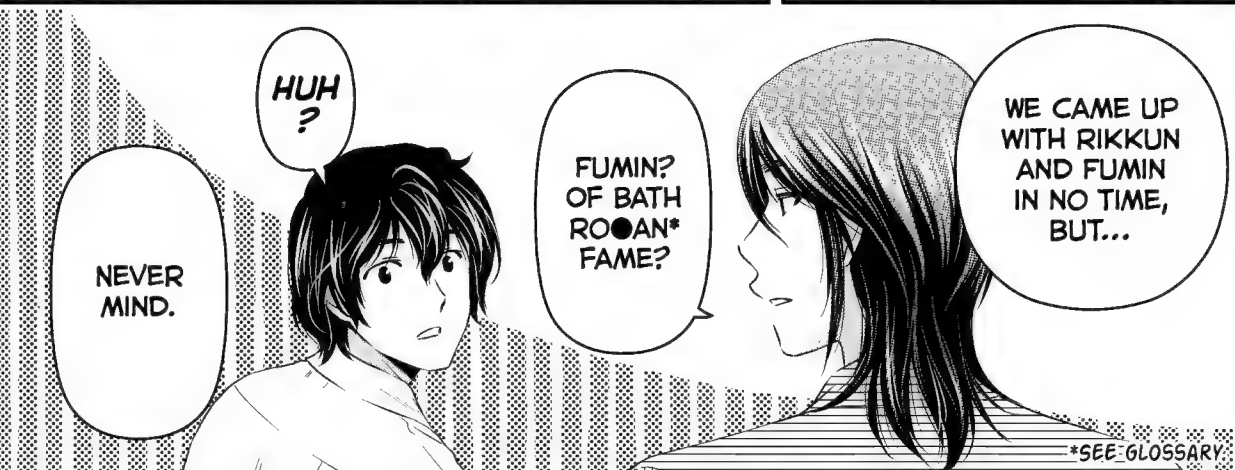
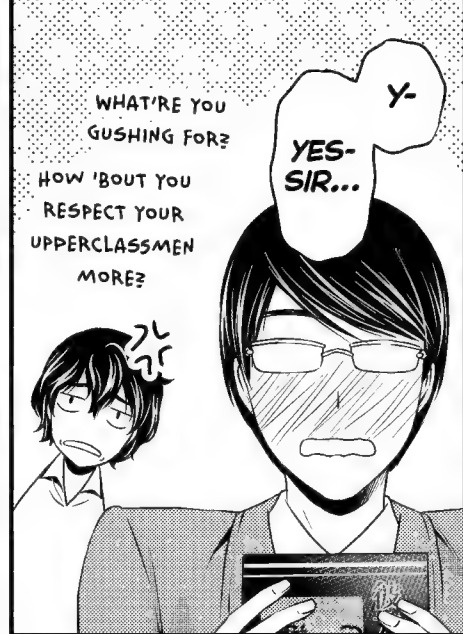
YES.

MY FATHER IS A
CHIEF CLERK AT
A BANK AND DID
EVERYTHING HE
COULD TO SAVE
THE SHIBASAKI
PLANT, BUT...

EVEN IF IT
WASN'T HIS
FAULT THE
COMPANY
FOLDED, I
COULDN'T
HELP BUT FEEL
A LITTLE RE-
SPONSIBLE.





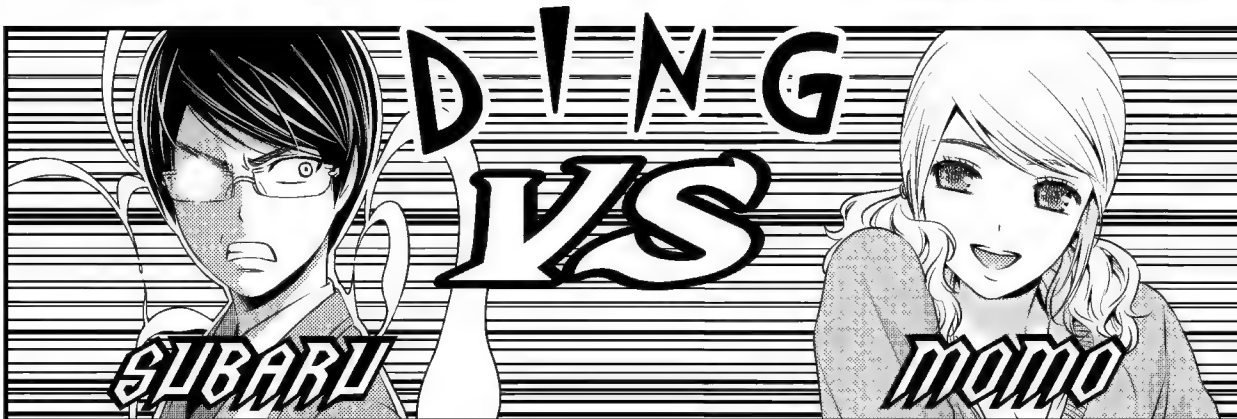




I SAID
I DON'T
WANT A
NICKNAME!
I SWEAR,
WHAT A
CRUDE
GROUP.

BARU-
CHAN.
♥

THEN
WHAT
ABOUT
BARU-
CHAN?



...SO
WE CAN
GET TO
KNOW YOU
BETTER,
SUBARU-
KUN.
♥

WE JUST
WANNA
GIVE YOU
A NICK-
NAME...



AWW
...

DON'T
BE LIKE
THAT.

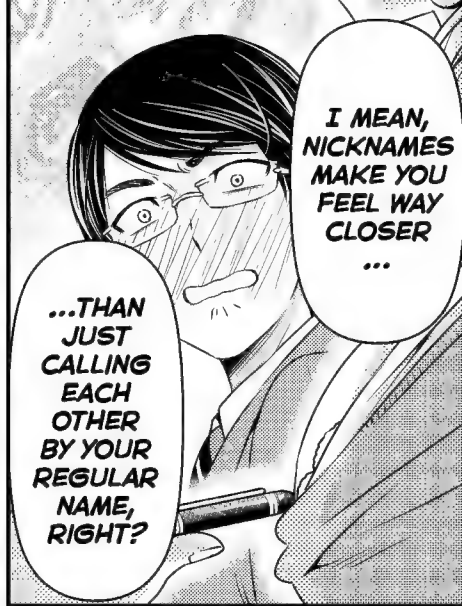


SURE THEY DOOO.



TH-THAT'S JUST YOUR IMAGINATION!

NICK-NAMES DON'T MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE!



I MEAN, NICKNAMES MAKE YOU FEEL WAY CLOSER ...

...THAN JUST CALLING EACH OTHER BY YOUR REGULAR NAME, RIGHT?



CALL IT A BATTLE OF NICKNAMES.

WHAT'S GOING ON?



WHAT? I'M NOT DOING ANYTHING.

C-CUT THAT OUT!



"MOMO-TAN" IS FINE, TOO. ♥

YOU DON'T HAVE TO CALL ME "SEMPAI."



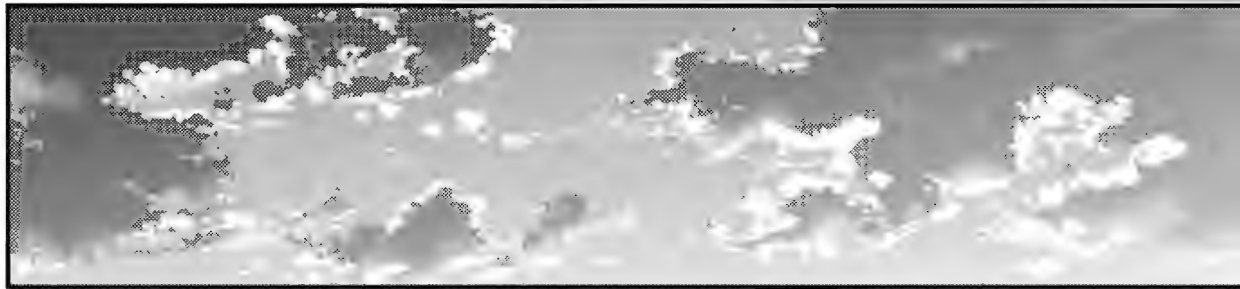
OKAY ?

BA ♥ RU ♥



C'MOOON.

YOU CAN CALL ME WHATEVER YOU WANT, TOO. ♥





CHAPTER 78: WAVERING DETERMINATION









HEY,
NOW.

I'M JUST
HERE TO
MAKE SURE
YOU DON'T
START
TROUBLE
IN MY SHOP
AGAIN.

WE'LL
BE FINE.



AH!

IT HAS A
VERY RE-
FRESHING
FLAVOR.

HOW
IS IT?

WHY ARE
YOU SITTING
DOWN LIKE
YOU BELONG
HERE?



I
WON'T!

QUIT
IMITATING
ME!

...AND
SHOUTS
SOMETHING
LIKE,
"DON'T MAKE
SENSE!
UNHAPPY!"?

WHAT
IF HE
GRABS
YOU
BY THE
COLLAR
...

YOU
NEVER
KNOW.



I'M NOT
THE SAME
PERSON I
WAS BACK
THEN.



EVEN I
THINK I
ACTED
PRETTY
IMMATURE
AT THE
TIME.



THEN,
THIS
IS
ABOUT
...



THERE ARE
ONLY SO
MANY THINGS
WE HAVE TO
TALK ABOUT.

WELL,

THAT
SAID,



...HINA-
CHAN
THE
OTHER
DAY.

I MET
...



WHO'D
HAVE
THOUGHT
THINGS
WOULD END
UP THIS WAY
BETWEEN
THE TWO
OF YOU?

I WAS
SHOCKED
TO HEAR
SHE'D BEEN
TRANSFERRED
ALL OF A
SUDDEN.

!



THEN AGAIN,
I SUPPOSE I
HAVE DON'T
HAVE TO RE-
ASSURE YOU,

SEEING
AS YOU'VE
ALREADY
BROKEN UP.

...

I ONLY
SEARCHED
HER OUT
BECAUSE
I WAS
CONCERNED.

OH, DON'T
WORRY.
WE'RE NOT
IN TOUCH
OR ANY-
THING.



...HINA
DOING
WELL?

IS
...



AS THINGS
STAND,

HOW DO
YOU FEEL
ABOUT
HINA-CHAN
NOW?

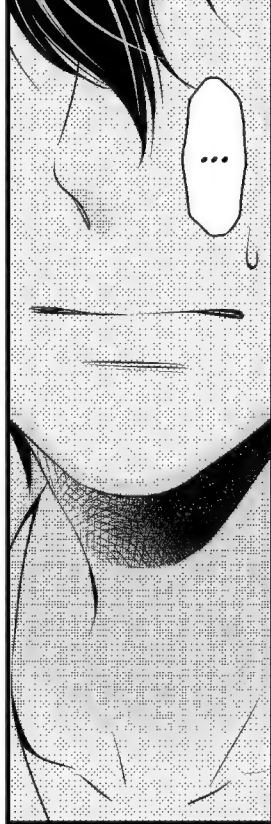


TELL ME,
NATSUO-
KUN.



...

CLINK

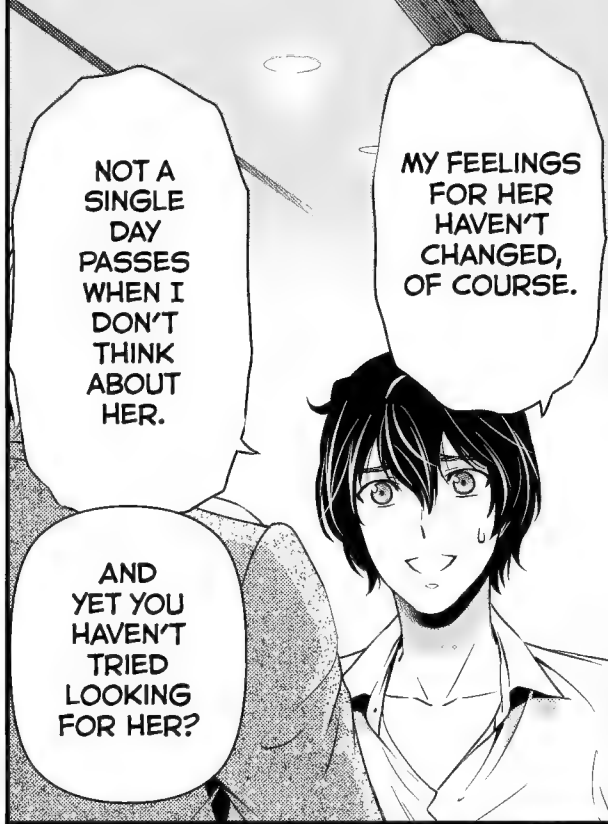


...

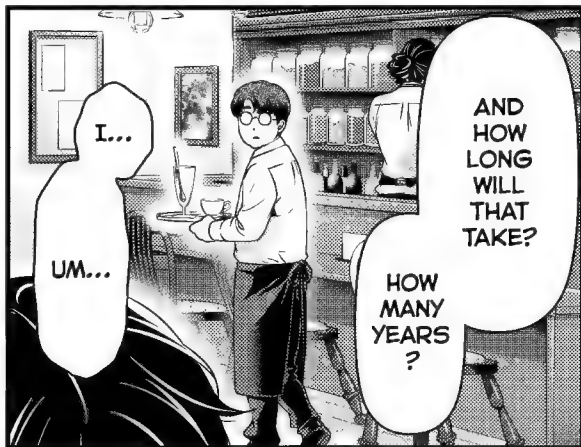
NOT A SINGLE DAY PASSES WHEN I DON'T THINK ABOUT HER.

AND YET YOU HAVEN'T TRIED LOOKING FOR HER?

MY FEELINGS FOR HER HAVEN'T CHANGED, OF COURSE.



"NOW?"



I...

UM...

AND HOW LONG WILL THAT TAKE?

HOW MANY YEARS?



WELL,

I'M WORKING HARD TO DEBUT AS A WRITER AS SOON AS—

I DID A RECEIVE A PRETTY BIG AWARD.



HINA LEFT IN ORDER TO PROTECT MY DREAM OF BECOMING A NOVELIST.

THAT'S WHY, I CAN'T IMAGINE SHE'D BE HAPPY IF I TRIED TO TRACK HER DOWN AS I AM NOW.

I THINK IF WE MEET AGAIN, IT SHOULD BE AFTER I MAKE MY DREAM COME TRUE.

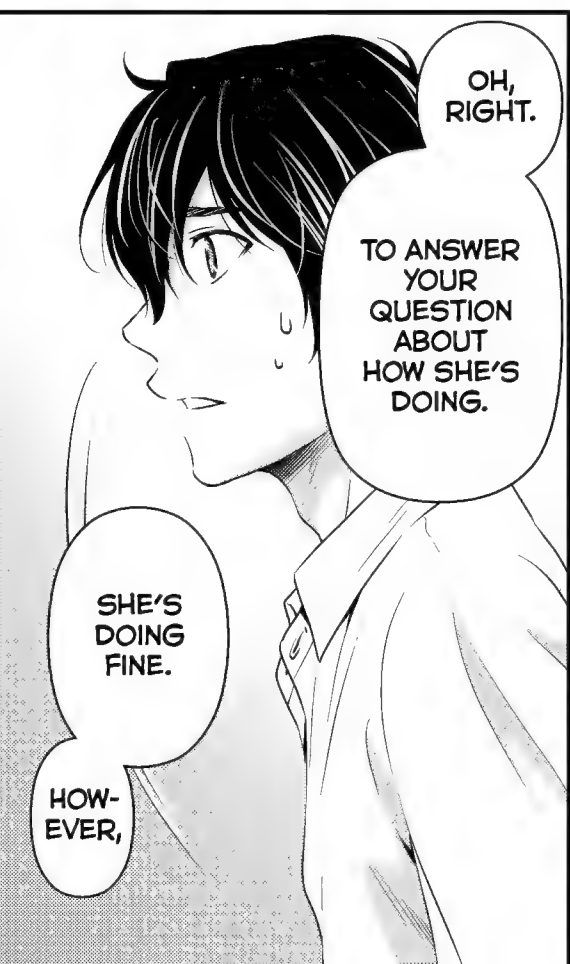


AND
WHAT IF
YOUR
HARD
WORK
NEVER
PAYS
OFF?



...HAVE
TO KEEP
WAITING
FOR YOU
FOREVER?

SHOULD
HINA-
CHAN
REALLY
...



OH,
RIGHT.

TO ANSWER
YOUR
QUESTION
ABOUT
HOW SHE'S
DOING.

SHE'S
DOING
FINE.

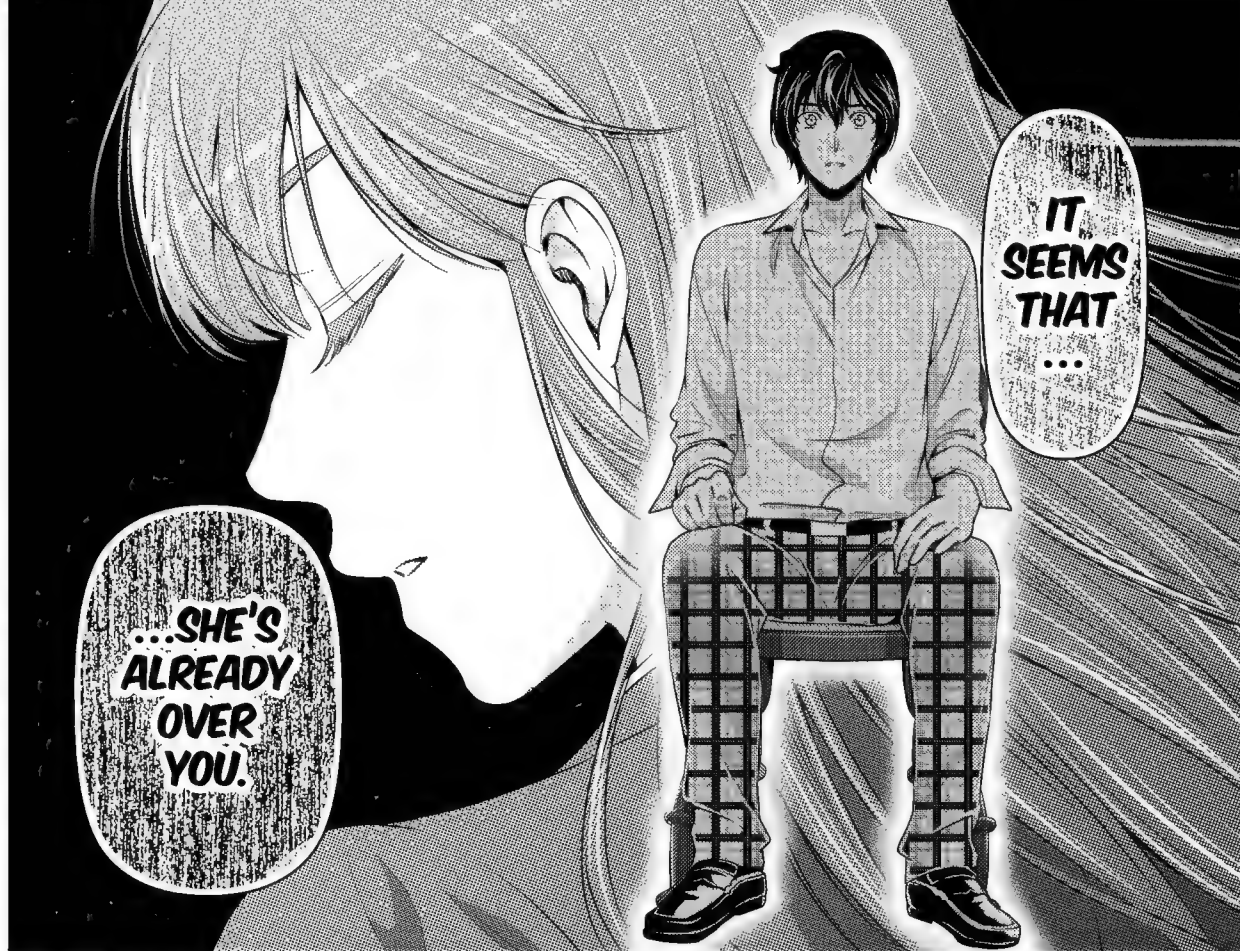
HOW-
EVER,



I JUST
WANTED TO
HEAR HOW
YOU FELT.

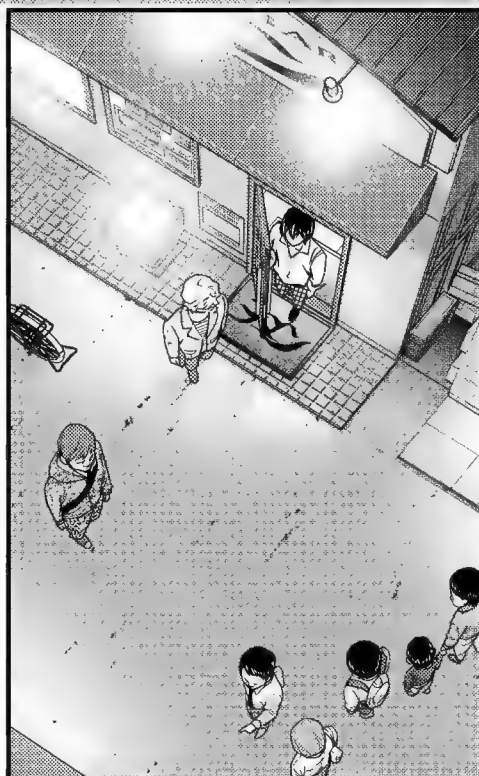
SORRY,
SORRY.

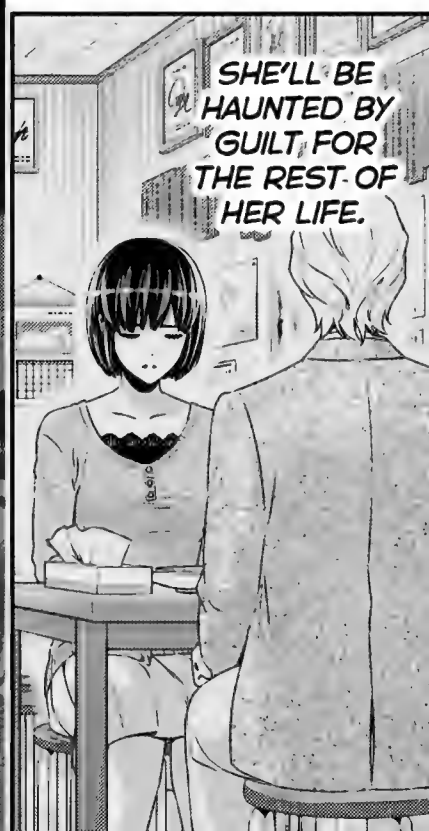
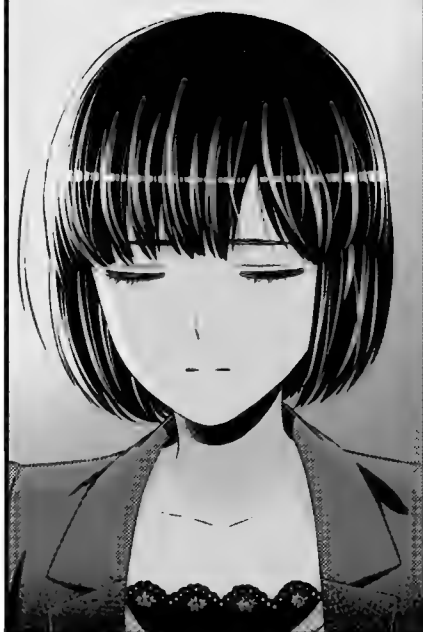
I DON'T
MEAN TO
PUT YOU
ON THE
SPOT.



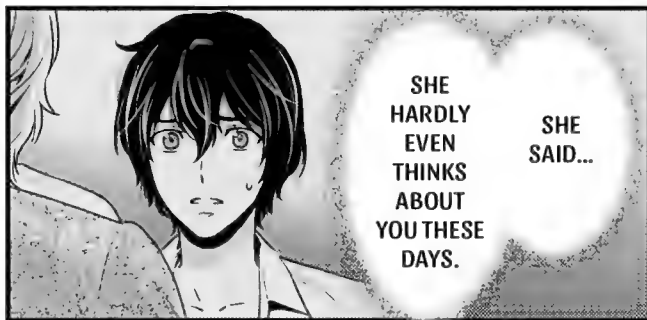
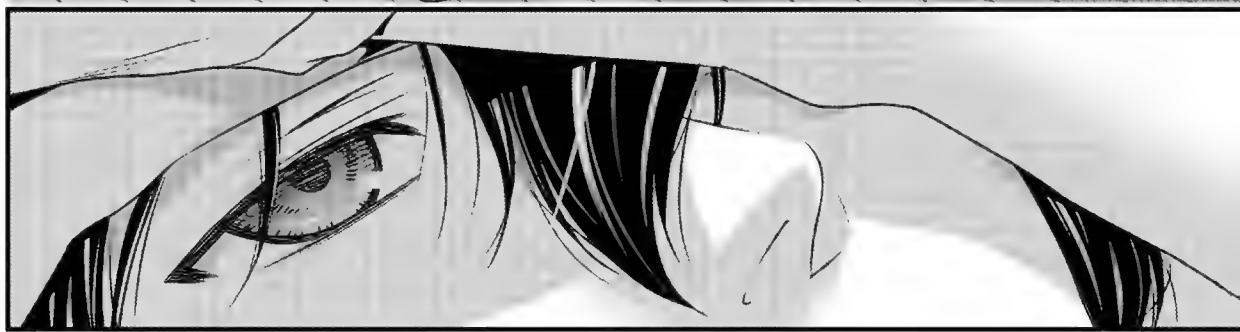
...THAT
RIGHT?

IS...









SHE
HARDLY
EVEN
THINKS
ABOUT
YOU THESE
DAYS.

SHE
SAID...



IT
SEEMS
THAT...
SHE'S
ALREADY
OVER
YOU.



IT'S NOT
LIKE I WANT
HER TO STAY
DEPRESSED
OVER ME
FOREVER,

BUT
...

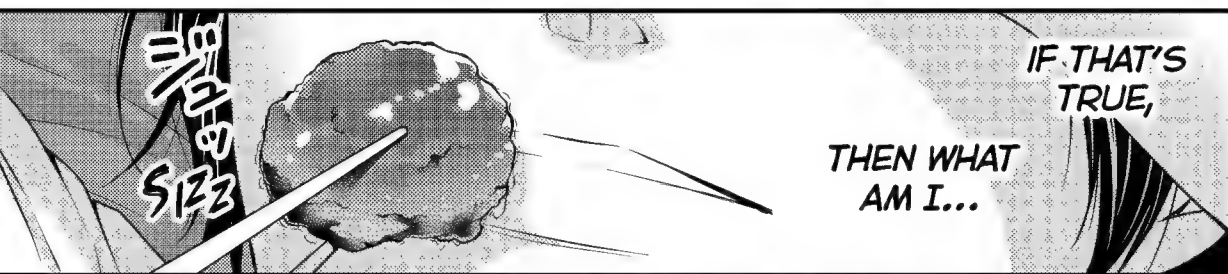
BUT WAS
OUR BOND
SERIOUSLY
THAT
FRAGILE?!

PEOPLE
ALWAYS SAY,
"OUT OF
SIGHT, OUT
OF MIND,"

BUT WHAT IF
HINA DOESN'T
FEEL THE
SAME WAY?

WHAT IF SHE
REALLY HAS
MOVED ON?

ALL THIS
TIME, I'VE
BEEN
WORKING
WITH THE
HOPES OF
BEING WITH
HINA AGAIN
SOMEDAY.





WHEN
DID YOU
SNEAK IN
HERE?!



YOU
SCARED
THE SHIT
OUTTA
ME!

SHWIP
はし



I TOLD YOU,
I'LL EAT
TOMORROW
...

I'M
NOT
HUNGRY
RIGHT
NOW.



WELL, THE
SWEET AND
SOUR PORK
CAME OUT
REALLY
GOOD.

TRY IT.







HEY
...



I RAN
INTO
HAGIWARA-
SAN
EARLIER.

HE
TOLD
ME
ABOUT
HINA.



I...

WHEN I
HEARD
THAT,

I STARTED
TO WONDER
IF I'M THE
ONLY ONE
WHO HASN'T
MOVED ON.

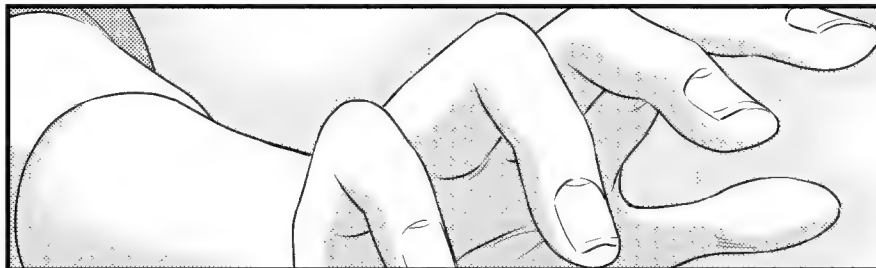
HE SAID
SHE'S
SETTLED
IN AND IS
DOING
WELL,

AND THAT
SHE'S SO
BUSY SHE
DOESN'T
HAVE TIME
TO THINK
ABOUT ME.



WHAT
?

APPARENTLY,
HE FOUND
OUT SHE
RELOCATED
AND WENT
LOOKING
FOR HER.



SO ALONE
ALL OF A
SUDDEN.

I FELT
...



THANKS
...

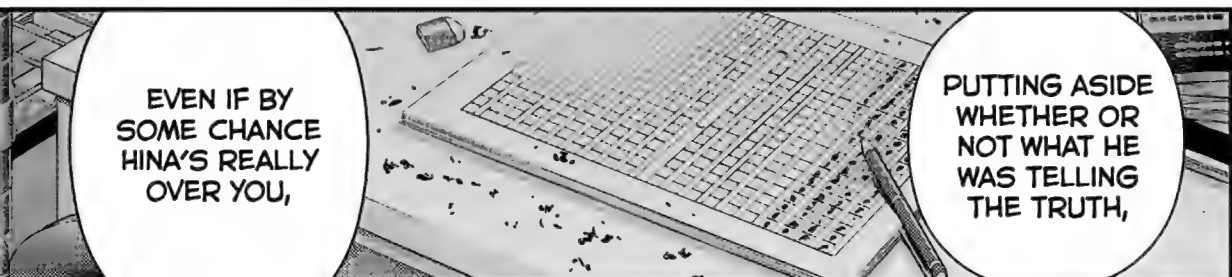
...FOR
TELLING
ME.





SURE

...



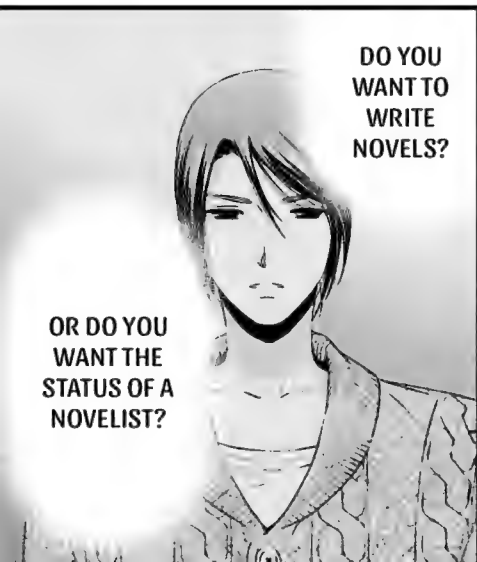
EVEN IF BY
SOME CHANCE
HINA'S REALLY
OVER YOU,

PUTTING ASIDE
WHETHER OR
NOT WHAT HE
WAS TELLING
THE TRUTH,



I RATHER
LIKE YOUR
STORIES.

...



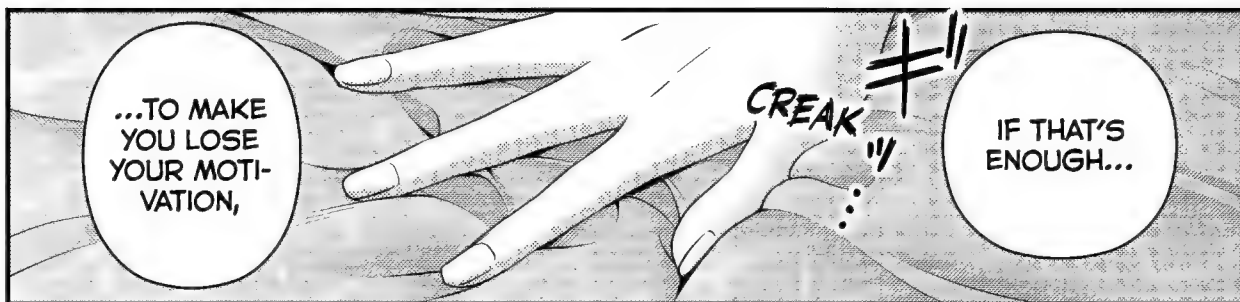
DO YOU
WANT TO
WRITE
NOVELS?

OR DO YOU
WANT THE
STATUS OF A
NOVELIST?



WOULD
THAT STOP
YOU...

...FROM
BECOMING
A NOVELIST
?



...TO MAKE
YOU LOSE
YOUR MOTI-
VATION,

IF THAT'S
ENOUGH...



THEN
FROM
NOW
ON,

YOU CAN
JUST KEEP
WRITING
FOR MY
SAKE.

CHAPTER 79: BUDDING FEELINGS?







BUT
MAKE
SURE
YOU AT
LEAST
TAKE A
BATH,
OKAY?!

A-ANY-
WAY!

YOU'RE
FREE TO
MOPE
AROUND
ALL YOU
WANT,



I WON'T...

...HOLD
BACK FOR
HINA-NEE
ANYMORE.



WHAT
TIME
IS IT?

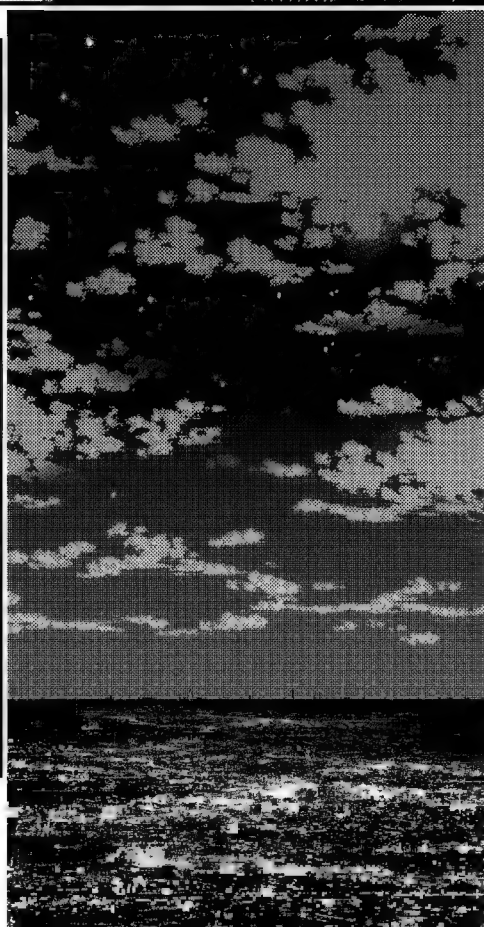
AH
...

CRAP...
DID I DOZE
OFF?

I BETTER
TAKE A
BATH...

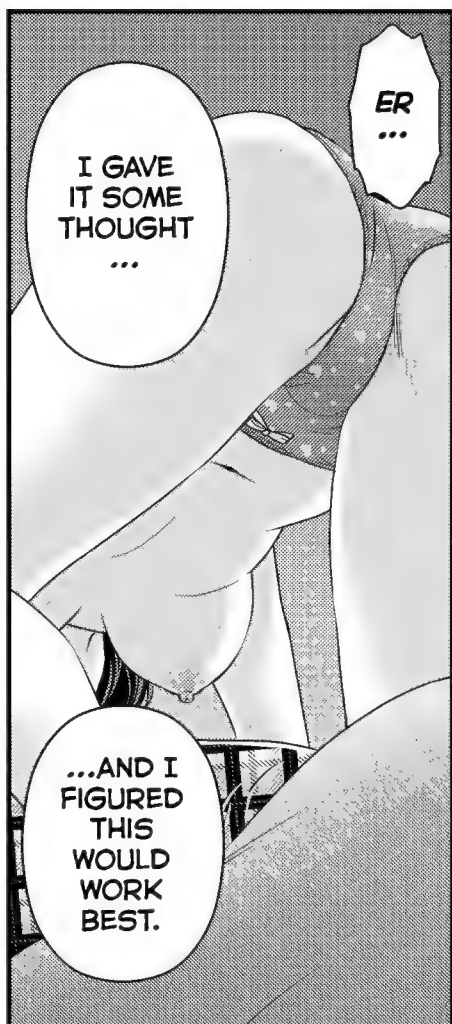


...OR
RUI'S
GONNA-





W
H
O
A
!



I GAVE
IT SOME
THOUGHT
...

ER
...

...AND I
FIGURED
THIS
WOULD
WORK
BEST.



OUR
PARENTS
ARE
ASLEEP.

I WANTED
TO DO
SOME-
THING TO
CHEER
YOU UP.

HUH
?!
WHA-

WHA-



SO THEY
MIGHT BE
A LITTLE
UNDER-
WHELMING,
BUT...

I
KNOW
...

MY
BOOBS
AREN'T
AS BIG
AS
HINA'S,



IT'S
BEEN SO
LONG,
I'M
GONNA
BLOW
ANY-

AHH
...



OH,
SHIT...

HOLD
UP.

DON'T
TOUCH
ME LIKE
THAT.



HNN
...

MMF
...



OPE

GR

!





WHAT ON EARTH WERE YOU DREAMING ABOUT?

A BLOODY NOSE, HUH?

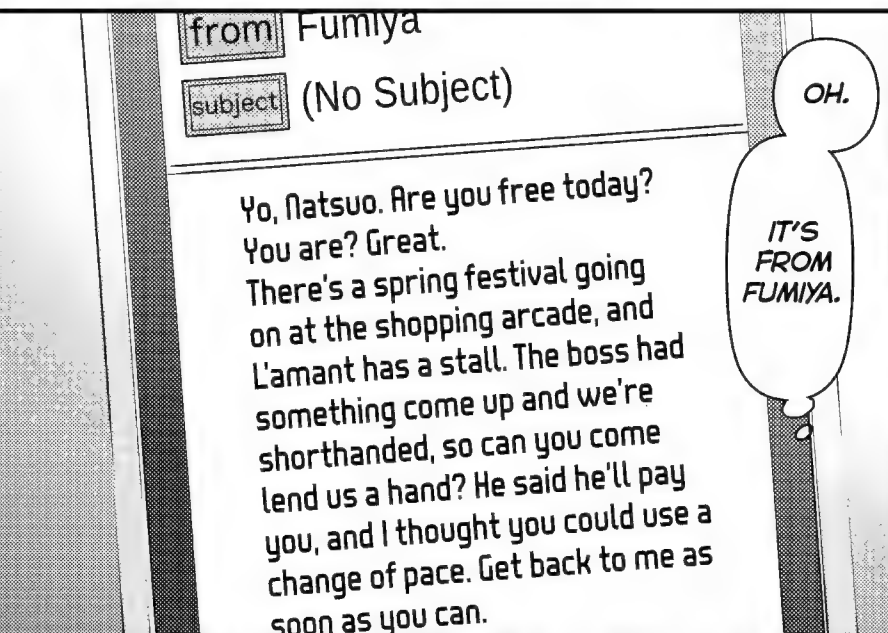


NO, DAMN IT!

DID YOU HAVE YOUR PERIOD ?!

BLOOD ?!

OH, GOD!



from Fumiya

subject (No Subject)

Yo, Natsuo. Are you free today? You are? Great. There's a spring festival going on at the shopping arcade, and L'amant has a stall. The boss had something come up and we're short-handed, so can you come lend us a hand? He said he'll pay you, and I thought you could use a change of pace. Get back to me as soon as you can.

OH.

IT'S FROM FUMIYA.



WHAT IS IT AT THIS HOUR?





OH!

HEY,
RUI-
CHAN!
YOU
CAME,
TOO?



HUH
...

I USED
TO COME
ALL THE
TIME UNTIL
MIDDLE
SCHOOL.

I DIDN'T
KNOW
ABOUT
THIS
FESTIVAL.



**NAT-
SUO!**

I DIDN'T
KNOW
L'AMANT
WAS
RUNNING
A STALL,
THOUGH.



WHERE
DID THE
OWNER
RUN OFF
TO?

YOU CAN
CHANGE IN
THE BACK
OF THE
SHOP.

HERE
ARE YOUR
SHIRTS AND
APRONS.



I WAS FREE,
SO I THOUGHT
I'D COME
HELP, TOO.

YOU'RE
A LIFE-
SAVER.

SUP.



OH,
MY.

HEY
NATSUO-
CHAN,
RUI-RUI.

UHH
...

WELL,
TECHNICALLY
HE'S HERE,
BUT...



IT
CAN'T
BE...

ERIKA
?!

WHO
?!



MY, OH, MY.
I THOUGHT
I KNEW THAT
UNCOUTH
LAUGH.
IF IT ISN'T
MARY!

LONG
TIME NO
SEE.

FLOOF



TO ENTER THE
MISTER LADY
CONTEST, OF
COURSE. I
FIGURED YOU'D
BE PARTICIPAT-
ING, AS WELL,
SEEING AS IT'S
YOUR TURF.

WHAT,
YOU
ASK?

WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING
HERE?



HE'S
ERIKA,
REAL
NAME
ETSUO
KIKUCHI.

ONLY
THE "E"
MADE IT
OVER...



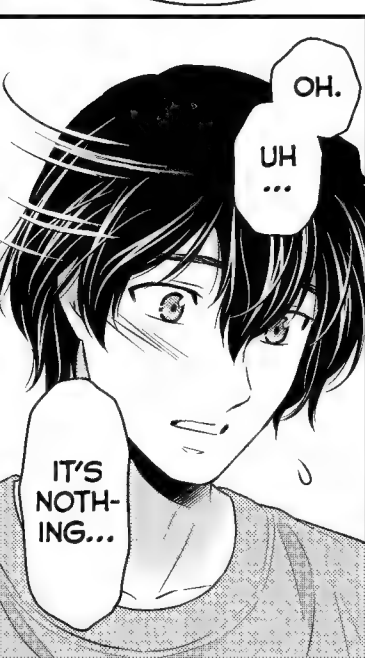
...AND SHOW
YOU WHICH
OF US IS
THE BETTER
WOMAN!

THIS TIME,
I SWEAR
I'LL WIN...

BACK WHEN
I WORKED AT
A GAY BAR,
HE SAW ME
AS A RIVAL
FOR SOME
REASON.





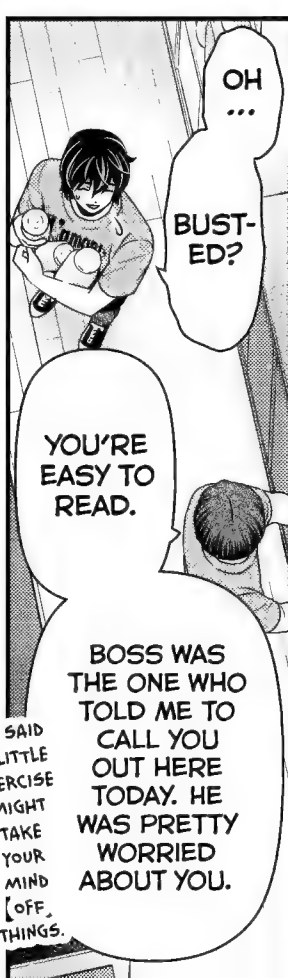
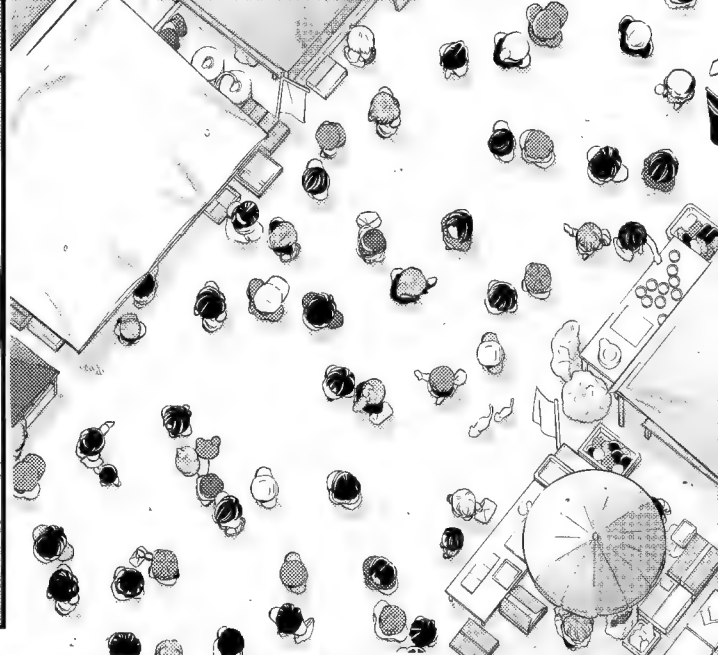




PHEW ...

LET'S RESTOCK WHILE WE HAVE THE CHANCE.

I THINK THE CROWD'S STARTING TO THIN OUT.



OH ...

BUST-ED?

YOU'RE EASY TO READ.

BOSS WAS THE ONE WHO TOLD ME TO CALL YOU OUT HERE TODAY. HE WAS PRETTY WORRIED ABOUT YOU.

HE SAID A LITTLE EXERCISE MIGHT TAKE YOUR MIND [OFF, THINGS.



HUH?

YOU LEFT THE STORE PRETTY DOWN AFTER TALKING TO SENSEI'S EX.



WERE YOU ALL RIGHT LAST NIGHT?

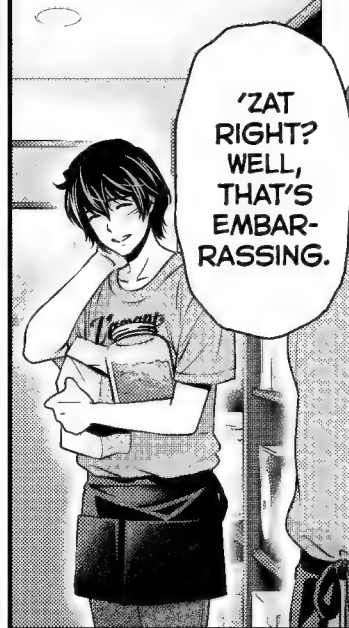


WHEN I
ASKED
HOW SHE
WAS
DOING,

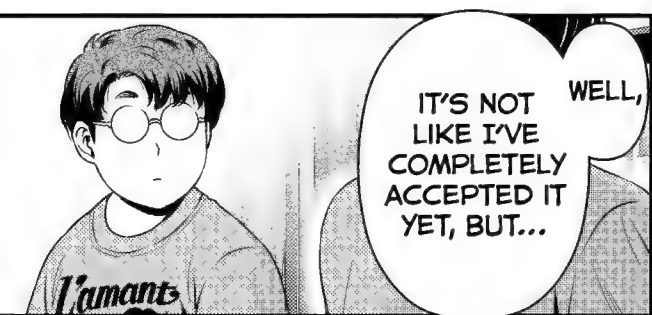
HE SAID
SHE'D
ALREADY
MOVED
ON.

IT'S
JUST,

APPARENTLY,
HAGIWARA-SAN
TRACKED
DOWN HINA.



'ZAT
RIGHT?
WELL,
THAT'S
EMBAR-
RASSING.



IT'S NOT
LIKE I'VE
COMPLETELY
ACCEPTED IT
YET, BUT...

WELL,



SHE
WORRIES
ABOUT YOU
LIKE IT'S
HER OWN
PROBLEM.

Y'KNOW,

RUI-CHAN'S
ALWAYS THE
ONE WHO
PICKS YOU
UP WHEN
YOU FALL.



YOU
BETTER
SHOW HER
SOME
APPRE-
CIATION,
OKAY?



HEARING
THAT MADE
ME FEEL
LIKE SHIT.

I STARTED TO
DOUBT WHY
I'M WORKING
MY ASS OFF
TO BECOME A
NOVELIST.

BUT THEN RUI
TOLD ME TO TRY
WRITING WITH
THE READERS IN
MIND, NOT JUST
FOR MY OWN
DREAM.

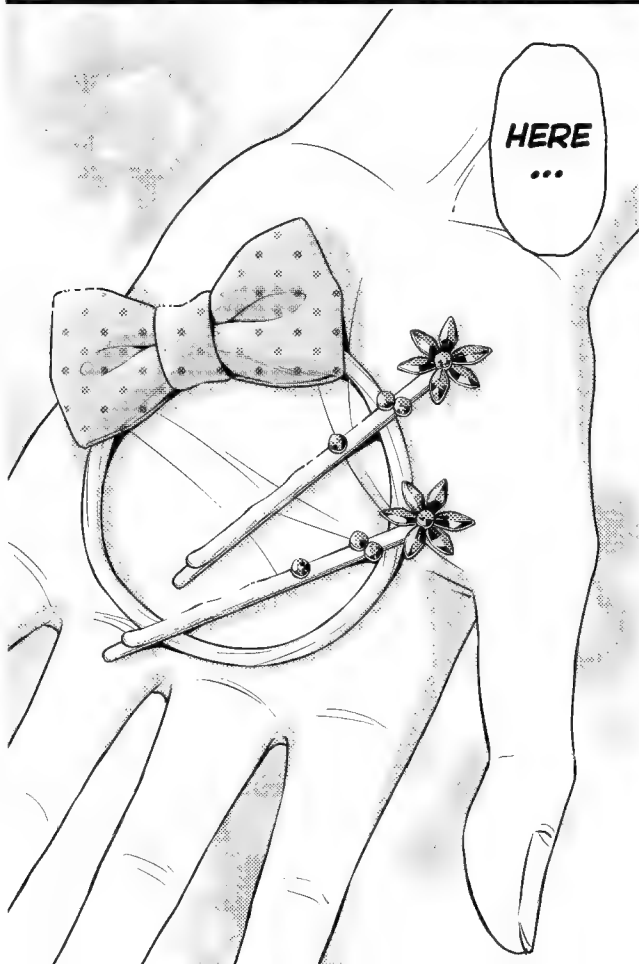
SO, I'VE
DECIDED TO
KEEP IT UP
FOR NOW.



OKAY.

YOU CAN
GO ON
BREAK
NOW, RUI-
CHAN.

OH,
NATSUO'S
BACK.



HERE
...



HEY.

UHH.



SEE
ANYTHING
NEAT?

WEL-
COME
BACK.

OH
...

YEAH, I
GUESS.



SORRY IF
IT'S NOT
REALLY
YOUR
THING...



IT'S
JUST A
LITTLE
SOME-
THING
...

...TO
THANK
YOU FOR
ALWAYS
LOOKING
OUT FOR
ME.



T H A N K S !



Y-YOU
OKAY?

OW,
OW
...

I'LL
TRY IT
ON.





HOW'S
IT
LOOK?

LOOKS
CUTE
...

IT...



WHO WOULD
EVER IMAGINE
HE'S NOT
A GIRL?!

MIDDLE
SCHOOL
SECOND-YEAR,
TSUBASA
TANEDA!

AND
THE
WINNER
IS...



OF
COURSE
THEY DO!

DO GIRLS
HAVE A SEX
DRIVE?

DOMEX GIRL



SERIOUS
?!

YOU

ARE



JAPANESE
GIRLS HAVE
ALWAYS BEEN
BROUGHT UP
TO BE MODEST.
THEY JUST
DON'T TALK
ABOUT IT.

HE'S
RIGHT!



WHO-OA!

IT'S
SAID
BIRTH-
RATES
SKY-
ROCKET
THEN,
TOO.

BY THE
WAY,
THEIR SEX
DRIVE IS
SUPPOS-
EDLY AT
ITS PEAK
DURING
A FULL
MOON.



WHERE'S
YOUR
PROOF?!

WE'VE
BROUGHT THIS
UP COUNTLESS
TIMES SINCE
GRADE SCHOOL,
YET WE NEVER
SEEM TO COME
TO A FIRM
CONCLUSION!

YOU GUYS...
IF GIRLS HAD
NO SEX DRIVE
WHATSOEVER,
THEN HOW DO
YOU EXPLAIN THE
FEMALE PERVERTS
THAT POP UP IN
THE NEWS NOW
AND THEN?



ISN'T THAT JUST A TESTAMENT TO HOW MUCH HE KNOWS?

AIBA WENT TO THE SAME MIDDLE SCHOOL AS NEGISHI AND CALLED HIM "ERO ZHUGE LIANG."

I'M ALWAYS BLOWN AWAY BY NEGISHI'S WELL OF KNOWLEDGE.

MAN ...

🧐 ✂️ *Ero Zhuge Liang: Someone who flaunts their extensive knowledge of sexual matters to other virgins, yet has no first-hand experience of their own.



AREN'T YOU IN THE LITERATURE CLUB?

OH ...

HEY, OSAKA.



...WHO'D EVEN SAY YES TO A BUNCH OF DESPERATE VIRGINS LIKE US.

SHIGH. I WONDER IF THERE'S A GODDESS OUT THERE ...



FROM WHAT HE TELLS ME,



WHAT IS? HUH ?!
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!

SO, LIKE,

MY BROTHER'S A THIRD-YEAR, RIGHT?



ISN'T MOMO KASHIWABARA IN THE SAME CLUB?

YEAH.

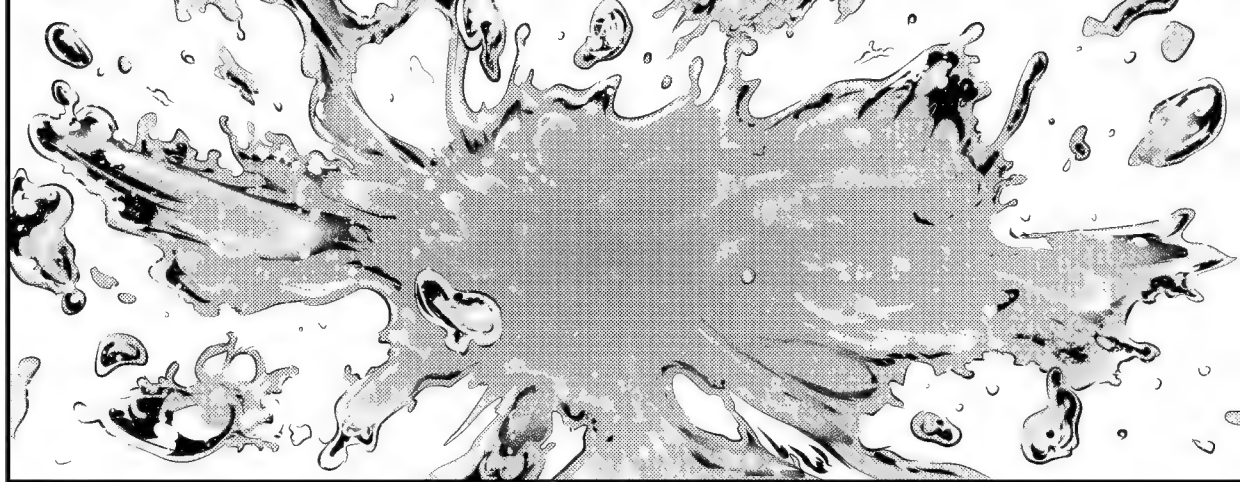
HUH ?
YEAH, SO?

SERI-
OUSLY?
NO, WAY,
DUDE!
THAT'S
AWESOME!

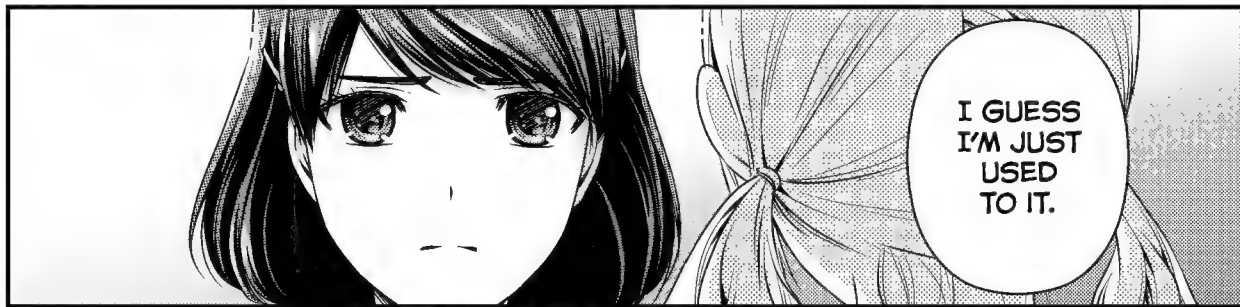


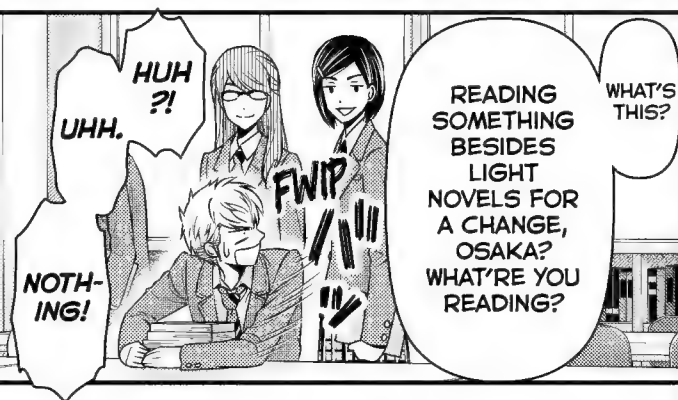
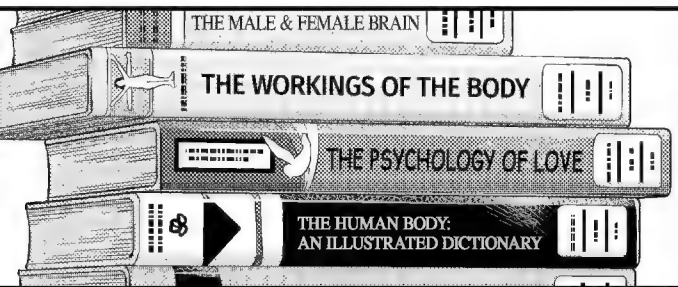
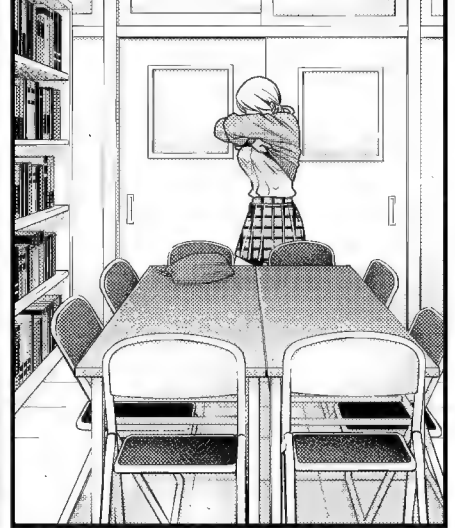
**SHE'LL
SLEEP
WITH ANY-
ONE WHO
ASKS!**

**SHE'S
FAMOUS
AROUND
HERE
FOR IT!**

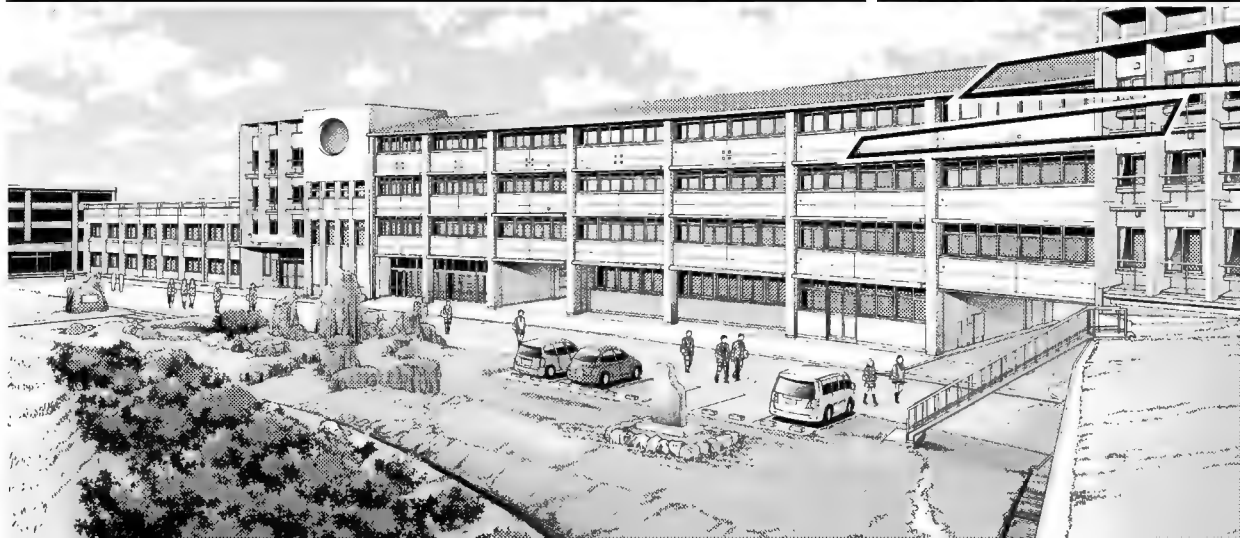


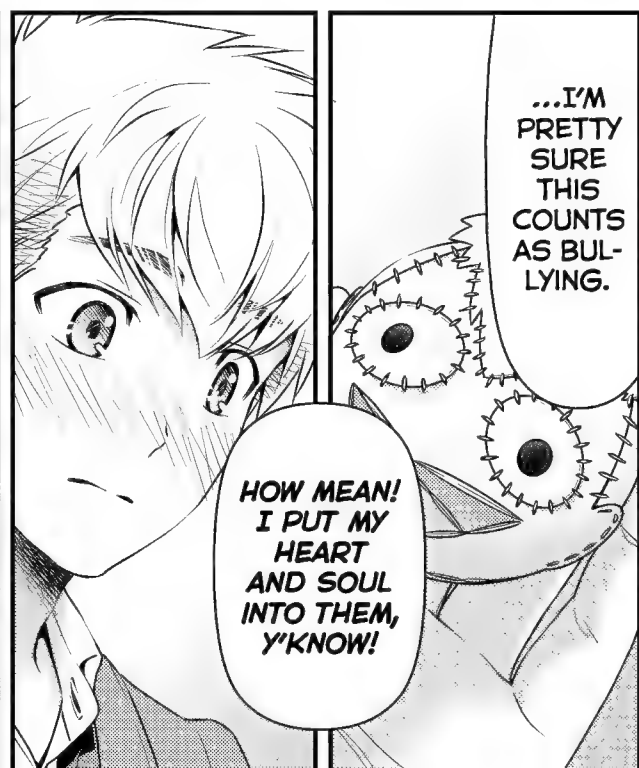














REAL-
LY?

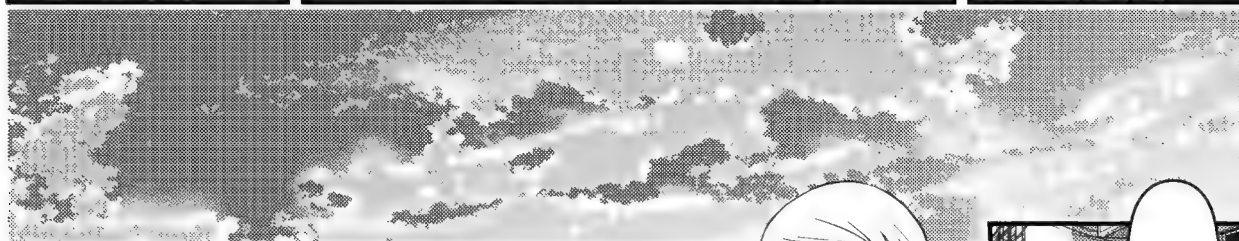
I'M
GLAD!

YES!

Y-

IT'S,
UHH,

CUTE.



AH!

YOU
ALREADY
PUT IT
ON YOUR
BAG!

HUH? OH,
Y-YEAH...



ALLIE DIDN'T
COME TODAY,
SO IT LOOKS
LIKE IT'S JUST
US TWO.



BYE-
BYE!

SEE
YA.



ER,

UMM.

MOMO-SEMPAI
...



AHH.
I SEE.

HEE,
HEE.
HOW CUTE.
♥



I HAVEN'T
GOTTEN SOME-
THING LIKE
THIS FROM A
GIRL BEFORE,
SO...

I'M
HAPPY.



UMM. YOU
DROPPED
THEM IN THE
CLUBROOM
DURING
LUNCH!

WAIT,
WHAT?! ARE
THESE MY
PANTIES?!

WHAT'S
THIS?



AND I
PROMISE
I DIDN'T
SNIFF THEM
OR WEAR
THEM ON
MY HEAD!

D-D-DON'T
WORRY! I
DIDN'T TELL
ANYONE OR
SHOW THEM
AROUND!



M-MAN,
WHAT
THE HELL
AM I
BABBLING
ABOUT?

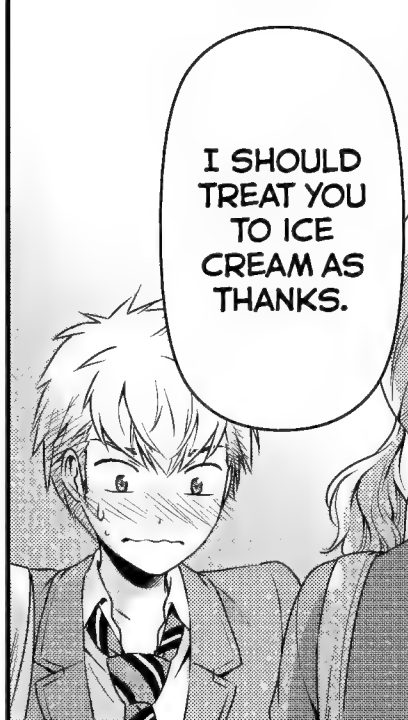
I JUST
WANTED
TO GIVE
THEM
BACK TO
YOU...

I DIDN'T
PICK THEM
UP FOR
ANY DIRTY
REASON
...



HE-

HERE
...

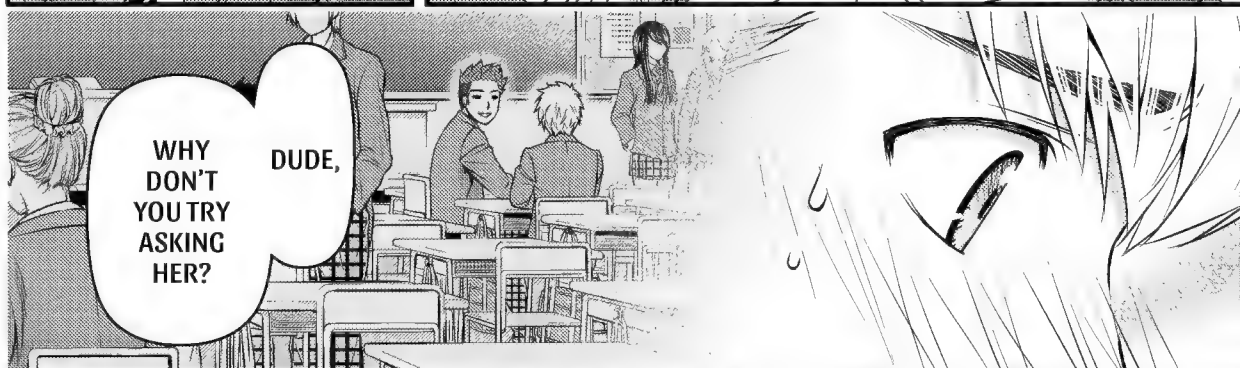


I SHOULD
TREAT YOU
TO ICE
CREAM AS
THANKS.



THANKS. ♥

YOU'RE
SO NICE,
RIKKUN.



WHY
DON'T
YOU TRY
ASKING
HER?

DUDE,



ERO

GIRLS
WANNA
BANG,
TOO.

YOU
HEARD
NEGISHI.

ZHUGE
LIANG

YOU
MIGHT HAVE
A SHOT IF
YOU TIME IT
RIGHT!



YOU
SOUND
LIKE A
CHICK.

REALITY
CHECK,
THAT KINDA
LOVEY-DOVEY
STUFF ONLY
HAPPENS
IN LIGHT
NOVELS.

W-WELL,
I WANT
MY FIRST
TIME...

TO BE
WITH
SOMEONE
I LOVE.



HUH?! ARE
YOU NUTS?
SHE'S OUR
SENIOR!

C'MON,
WHAT DO
YOU HAVE
TO LOSE?

YOU CAN
JUST PLAY
IT OFF AS A
JOKE IF SHE
SAYS NO.



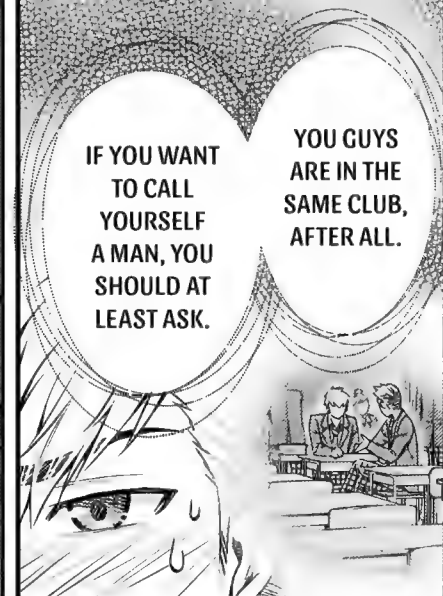
I HEARD
THIS FROM
SOME GUYS,
BUT...

UMM
...

HEY
...



GULP



IF YOU WANT
TO CALL
YOURSELF
A MAN, YOU
SHOULD AT
LEAST ASK.

YOU GUYS
ARE IN THE
SAME CLUB,
AFTER ALL.



UMM
...

THEY'RE
NOT TRUE,
RIGHT?

THOSE
RUMORS
ABOUT
YOU,
MOMO-
SEMPAI
...



FORGET
I ASKED!

IT'S JUST
SOMETHING
MY STUPID
FRIEND
TOLD ME.

ERR
...

NEVER
MIND!
SORRY!

OHH.



RU-
MORS
?



YOU MEAN
THE ONE
ABOUT HOW
I'LL SLEEP
WITH ANYONE
WHO ASKS?



THAT WAS
REALLY
RUDE
OF ME...

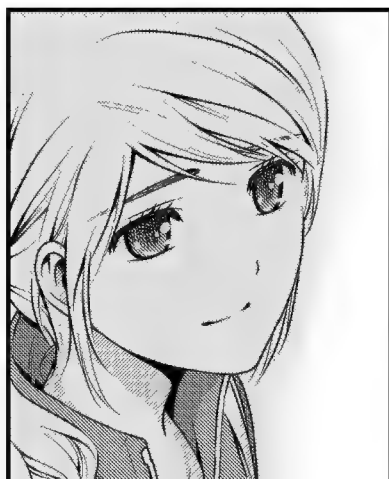
I,
UMM...

SOR-
RY.



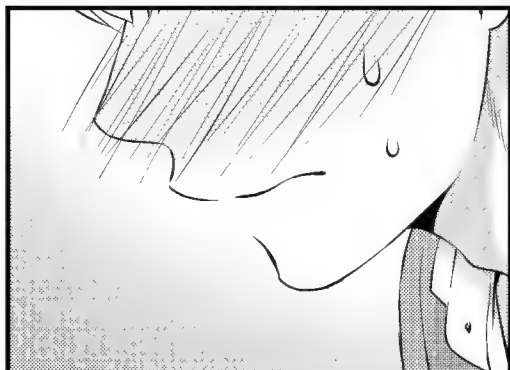
WANT
TO
KNOW
...

...WHETHER
IT'S TRUE
OR NOT?



...!







HERE!
IT'S THE ICE
CREAM I
PROMISED
FOR PICK-
ING UP MY
PANTIES.

NO
PROBLEM.

MY HAIR WAS
ALL STIFF, SO
I WAS DYING
TO WASH IT.

SORRY
FOR THE
WAIT!

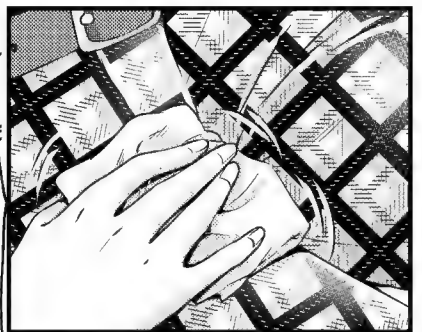
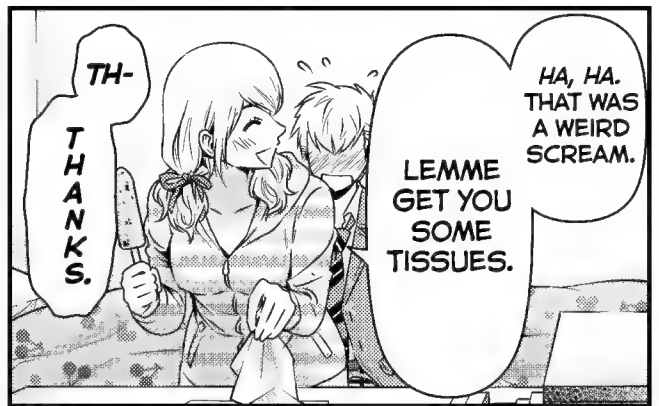


I REMEM-
BERED I
HAD SOME
IN THE
FREEZER.

THIS ICE
CREAM
IS SOOO
GOOD!



HM
...





HOW'D YOU
LIKE THE
SAKURA
CHOCOLATE
CHIP?

Y-YEAH.
IT WAS
GOOD.

I'VE
NEVER
TASTED
THAT
FLAVOR
BEFORE
...



AHH.

ICE CREAM
AFTER A
SHOWER IS
THE BEST!



I STILL
HAVEN'T
ANSWERED
YOUR
QUESTION
...

...ABOUT
WHETHER
OR NOT
THAT
RUMOR
IS TRUE,
HUH?



OH,
YEAH.



HEY,
RIK-
KUN.

DO YOU
HAVE ANY-
ONE YOU
LIKE?



...



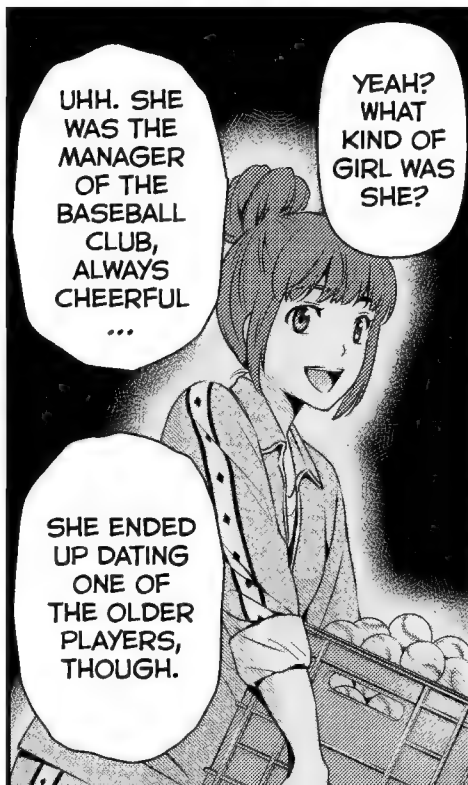
NO...

...



OKAY,
NOW TRY
THINKING
ABOUT
HER...

...AND
LOOK
AT ME.



UHH. SHE
WAS THE
MANAGER
OF THE
BASEBALL
CLUB,
ALWAYS
CHEERFUL
...

SHE ENDED
UP DATING
ONE OF
THE OLDER
PLAYERS,
THOUGH.

YEAH?
WHAT
KIND OF
GIRL WAS
SHE?



HAVE
YOU
EVER?

LIKE IN
ELEMEN-
TARY OR
MIDDLE
SCHOOL.

OH...
I DID IN
MIDDLE
SCHOOL.
IT WAS
JUST A
CRUSH,
THOUGH.



...YOU CAN
IMAGINE
THAT I'M
HER?

IS
THERE
ANY
WAY
...



...
NO
...

I
CAN'T...



....!



IS IT
FUJII-
SEMPAI?

HUH?
HOW
DID YOU
KNOW?!
OH,
GOD!

WELL,
YOU'RE
ALWAYS
ALL OVER
HIM...



I HAVE
SOMEONE
I LIKE,
TOO,

BUT I
CAN'T
PRETEND
YOU'RE
HIM.



ME,
NEITHER.



THE ONE
I WANT TO
DO ALL
SORTS OF
THINGS
FOR IS
NATSUO-
KUN.

THE
ONE I
WANT
RIGHT
NOW,

THAT'S
RIGHT.
IT'S
NATSUO-
KUN.

HEE,
HEE.

OH, YEAH?
WELL,
THAT'S
EMBAR-
RASSING.



SO
I'M NOT
SURPRISED
RUMORS
LIKE THAT
SPREAD.

IT'S
TRUE
THAT
...

I'VE
PROBABLY
DATED
MORE
PEOPLE
THAN
AVERAGE,



SO,

ALL THAT
ABOUT ME
SLEEPING
WITH JUST
ANYONE...

IS A
LIE.

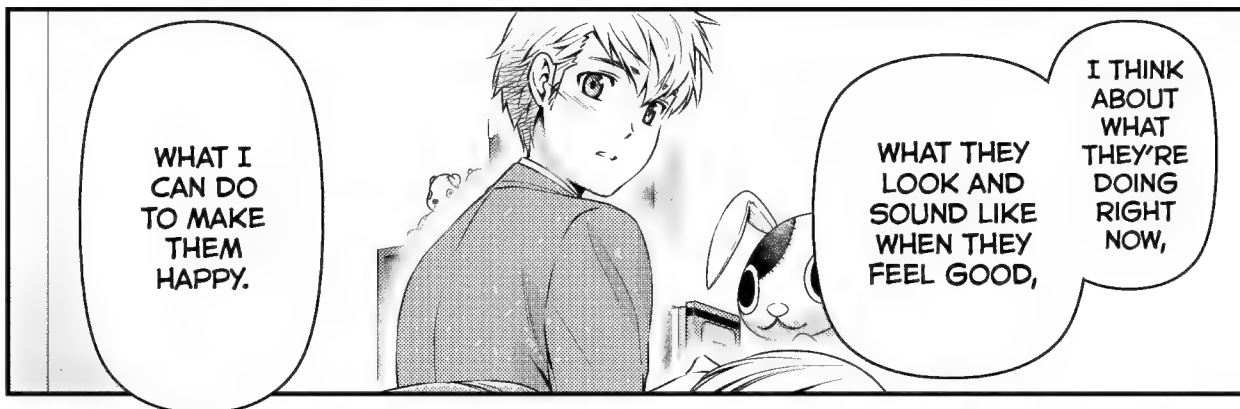


PEOPLE
MIGHT HAVE
ALL SORTS
OF OPINIONS
ABOUT SEX
AND RELA-
TIONSHIPS,

BUT EVERY
GUY I'VE
DATED WAS
SOMEONE
I WAS IN
LOVE WITH
AT THE
TIME.

BUT I ONLY
FEEL THAT WAY
ABOUT PEOPLE
I TRULY LOVE.

THEY
WEREN'T
JUST
"ANYONE."



WHAT I
CAN DO
TO MAKE
THEM
HAPPY.

WHAT THEY
LOOK AND
SOUND LIKE
WHEN THEY
FEEL GOOD,

I THINK
ABOUT
WHAT
THEY'RE
DOING
RIGHT
NOW,



THE PEOPLE
WHO TAKE
THE RUMORS
SERIOUSLY OR
THE PEOPLE
WHO SPREAD
THEM...

...MIGHT DO
SO BECAUSE
THEY'RE
HOLDING OUT
HOPE FOR
SOMETHING,
BUT...



BUT FINDING
OUT THAT WAS
HOW PEOPLE
TALKED ABOUT
ME BEHIND MY
BACK MADE ME
SO UPSET THAT
I BROKE DOWN
AND CRIED.

I SOME-
HOW
MANAGED
TO RUN
AWAY AT
THE TIME,

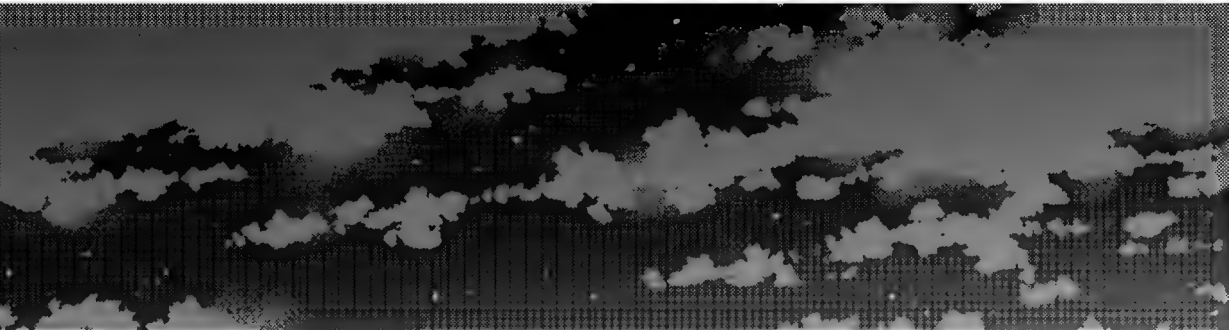
IT FELT
LIKE
PEOPLE
WERE
DENYING
THE LOVE
I'D FELT
UNTIL
THEN.

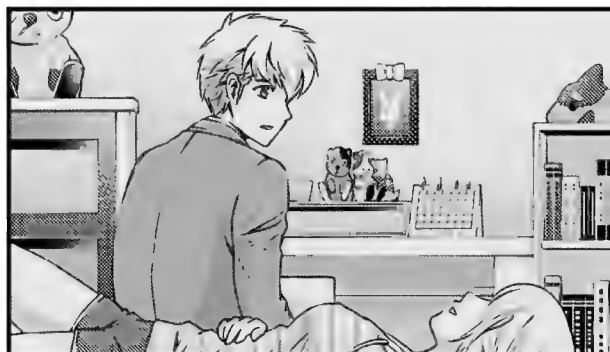


I HAD A
PRETTY
DANGEROUS
RUN-IN WITH
A GUY WHO
BELIEVED
THOSE
RUMORS
BEFORE.

C'MON.
YOU'LL DO
IT WITH
ANYONE,
RIGHT?

...THAT'S
WHAT HE
SAID.





...HURT
HER.

RIKKUN'S
NOT HERE
TODAY,
EITHER?

HUH?

HUH.

WONDER
IF HE'S
GOT SOME-
THING
PLANNED.

I RAN INTO
HIM ON THE
WAY HERE,

BUT HE
SAID HE
WASN'T
COMING
TODAY.

I WANTED
TO GIVE
BACK THE
MANGA HE
LENT ME.



ANY
LUCK
?

OH,
YEAH.
HOW'D
IT GO?



THE
NEXT
DAY



FINDING
OUT WHETHER
OR NOT THE
RUMOR ABOUT
THE SEXY
CLUB SENIOR
IS TRUE.

YOU
KNOW,

HUH
?



WH-WHAT?!
I WAS JUST
ASKING!

DON'T
EVER
BRING
THAT UP
AGAIN!

RAWR

SHUT THE
HELL UP!
GIVE IT
A REST
ALREADY!



OH?

ARE YOU
JUST
TALKING
TO YOUR-
SELF,

OR
SHOULD
I TAKE
THAT AS
A MES-
SAGE?



MAYBE
...

...I
SHOULD
JUST QUIT
THE CLUB.



THE
HELL,
MAN?
HE WAS
CURIOUS,
TOO...

SIGH



DON'T
YOU START
CALLING
ME THAT,
TOO! IT'S
IRRITAT-
ING!

BA-
BARU-
SU!

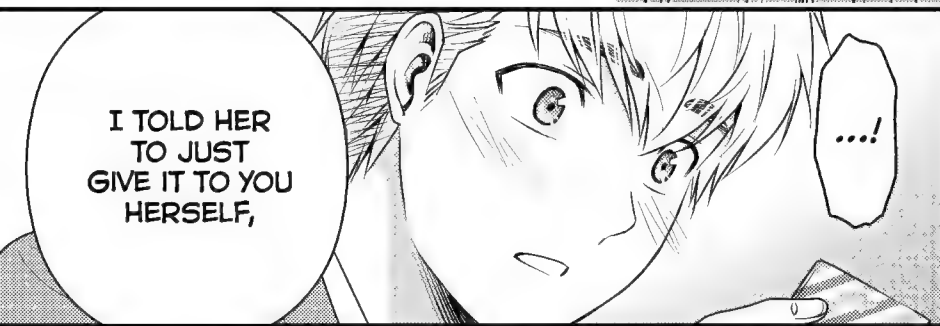


IF YOU
REALLY
WANT TO
QUIT, THEN
I'LL LET
SENSEI
KNOW,

BUT
TAKE
THIS.

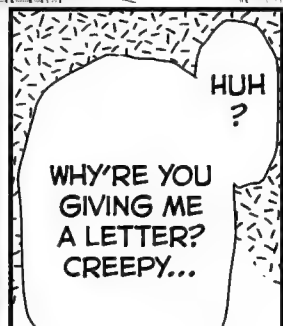


ACK!



I TOLD HER
TO JUST
GIVE IT TO YOU
HERSELF,

...!



HUH
?

WHY'RE YOU
GIVING ME
A LETTER?
CREEPY...



I DON'T
WANT
PEOPLE
...

...TO START
GIVING HIM
WEIRD LOOKS
IF I DELIVER IT
IN PERSON.



BUT SHE
ASKED ME
TO DELIVER
IT BECAUSE
OF SOME
RUMOR GOING
AROUND THE
FIRST-YEARS.

Don't worry about what
happened the other day.
I just miss seeing you
at club, Rikkun.

Momo



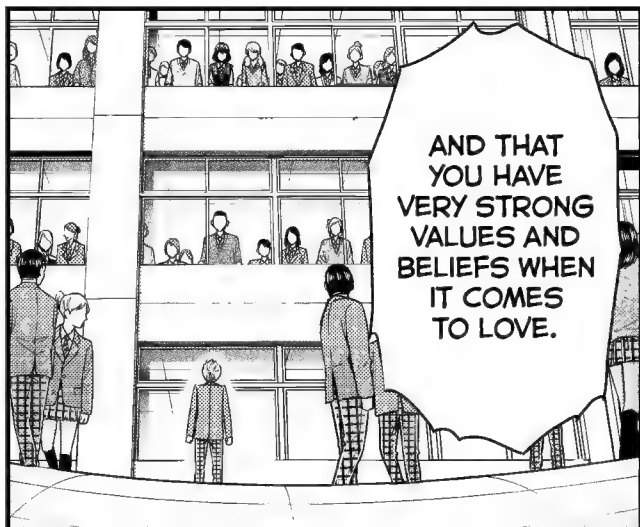
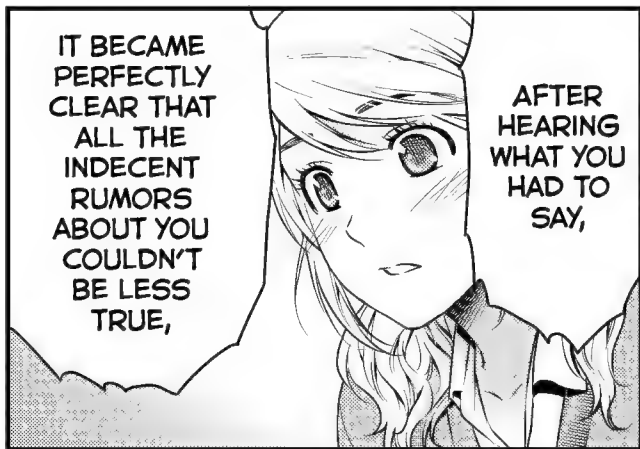
NOT ME!
IT'S FROM
KASHIWA-
BARA-
SEMPAI!





**MOMO-
SEMPAI!**

**ARE YOU
THERE?!**





...YOU'RE
STRONGER
AND KINDER
THAN THEY
COULD
EVER HOPE
TO BE.

I REAL-
IZED...

NO MATTER
WHAT PEOPLE
SAY BEHIND
YOUR BACK,

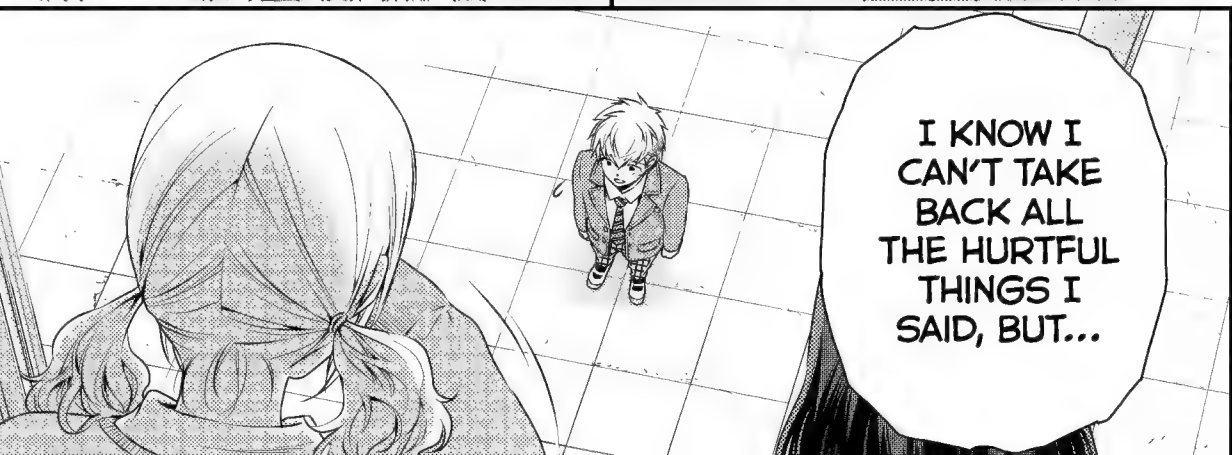


...THERE
ISN'T ANYONE
AROUND...

...WHOSE
LOVE IS
PURER
THAN
YOURS.



AND
THAT
...



I KNOW I
CAN'T TAKE
BACK ALL
THE HURTFUL
THINGS I
SAID, BUT...



**COME
BACK TO
CLUB,
OKAY?**

**IT'S
OKAY,
RIKKUN!**



SURE!

GUESS
IT'S
POINT-
LESS
TELLING
YOU TO
TAKE A
HINT.

**AL,
YOU'LL
MAKE
HIM RUN
AWAY
AGAIN...**

WELL...
UMM...

**FIDG
FIDG**

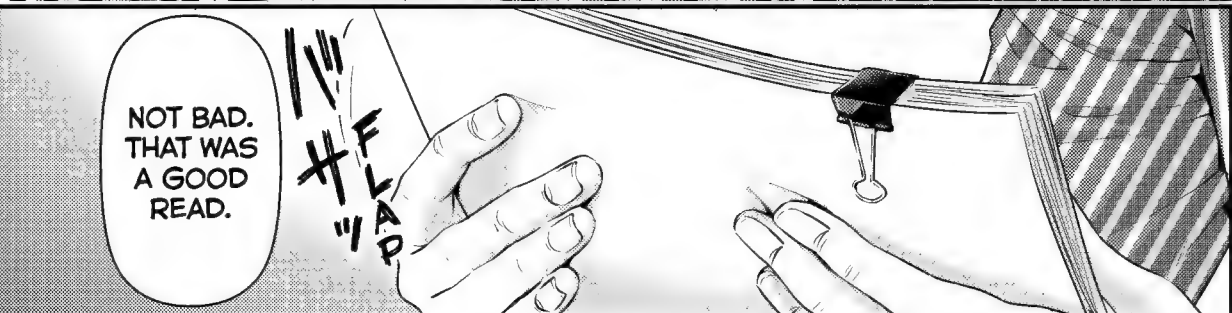
WHAT
HURTFUL
THINGS DID
YOU SAY?
WHAT RU-
MORS?

I HEARD
YOUR
LITTLE
SPEECH
DURING
LUNCH,
BUT...

SO,

AFTER
SCHOOL

CHAPTER 82: WHAT'S IMPORTANT



I THINK
IT'S UP
TO PAR
FOR SALE
AS A
STAND-
ALONE
STORY,

THE
PROTAGO-
NIST'S
PERSON-
ALITY IS
WELL-
DEVELOP-
ED, TOO.

BUT
...



YEAH. THE
ALIEN NEGOTI-
ATION SCENE
WAS REALLY
WELL DONE.

REALLY
?!

THE
PACING'S
GOOD, AND
IT'S EASY
TO GET
INTO.



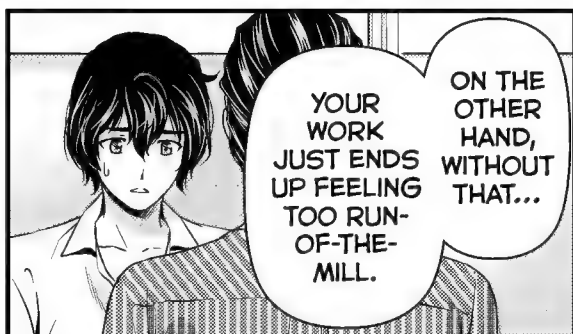
...IT
DOESN'T
COME
CLOSE
TO YOUR
AWARD
PIECE.



...!

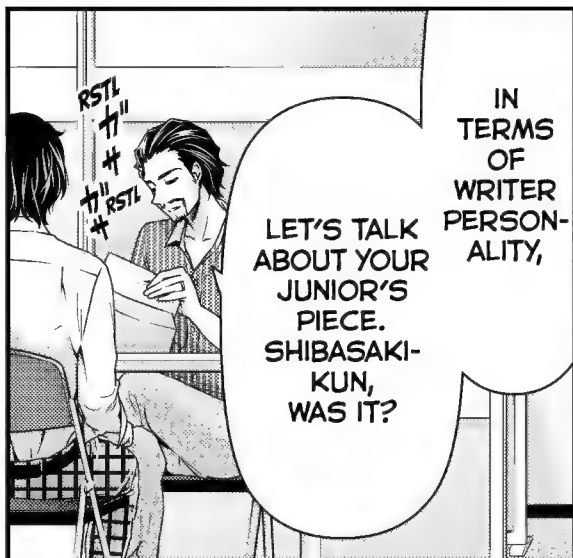
HOWEVER, IT
FEELS LIKE
THOSE SAME
SKILLS ARE
MAKING YOUR
WORK A LITTLE
CONTRIVED
AND TOOTH-
LESS.

YOUR RANGE
OF EXPRESSION
AND TECHNICAL
WRITING SKILLS
ARE DEFINITELY
IMPROVING.



YOUR
WORK
JUST ENDS
UP FEELING
TOO RUN-
OF-THE-
MILL.

ON THE
OTHER
HAND,
WITHOUT
THAT...



LET'S TALK
ABOUT YOUR
JUNIOR'S
PIECE.
SHIBASAKI-
KUN,
WAS IT?

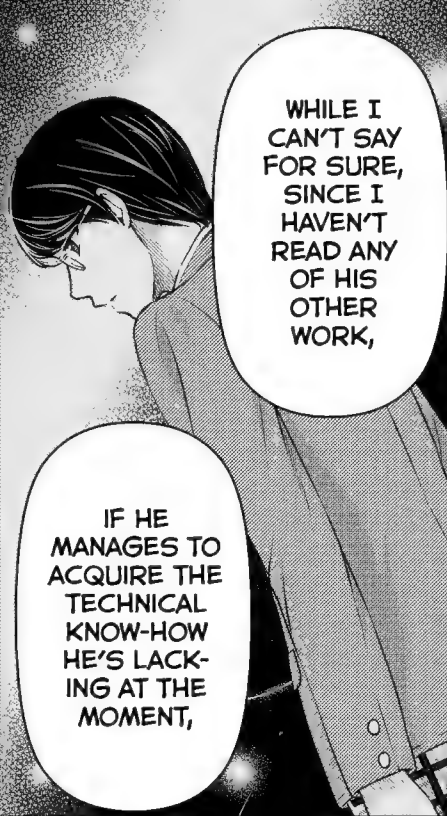
IN
TERMS
OF
WRITER
PERSON-
ALITY,



THE
PAINFULLY
REALISTIC
PHRASING
AND EXPRES-
SION THAT
SHINED IN
YOUR AWARD
PIECE...

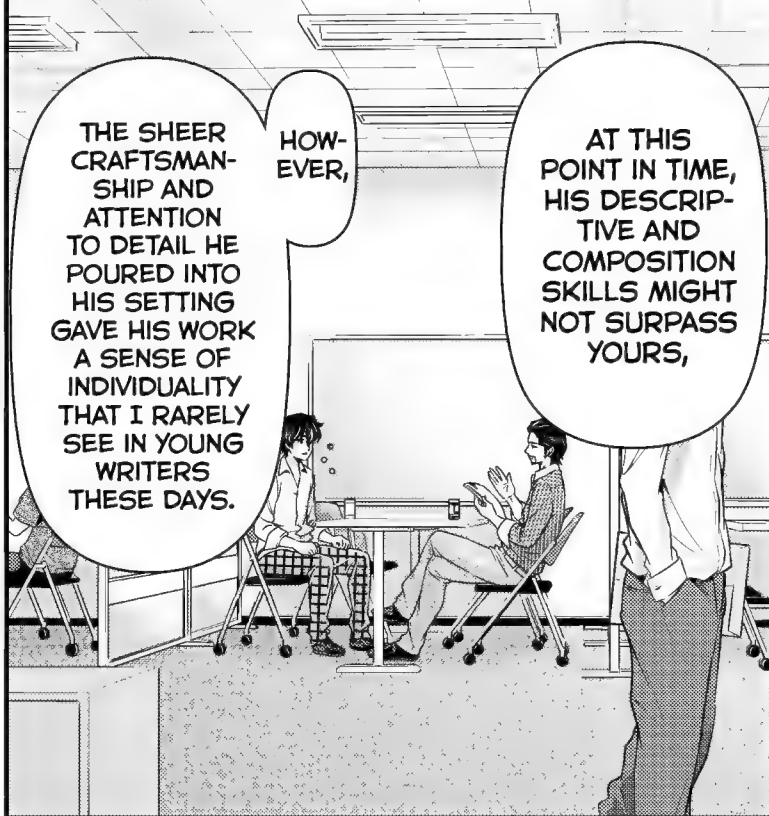
MADE IT
FEEL MORE
LIKE A
REFLECTION
OF YOUR
SOUL.

I THINK
THAT'S
WHERE
YOUR
APPEAL
AS A
WRITER
LIES.



WHILE I
CAN'T SAY
FOR SURE,
SINCE I
HAVEN'T
READ ANY
OF HIS
OTHER
WORK,

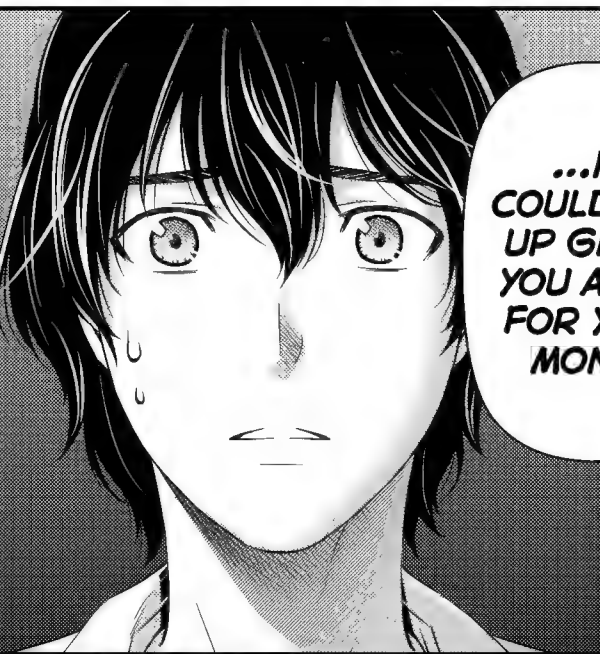
IF HE
MANAGES TO
ACQUIRE THE
TECHNICAL
KNOW-HOW
HE'S LACK-
ING AT THE
MOMENT,



THE SHEER
CRAFTSMAN-
SHIP AND
ATTENTION
TO DETAIL HE
POURED INTO
HIS SETTING
GAVE HIS WORK
A SENSE OF
INDIVIDUALITY
THAT I RARELY
SEE IN YOUNG
WRITERS
THESE DAYS.

HOW-
EVER,

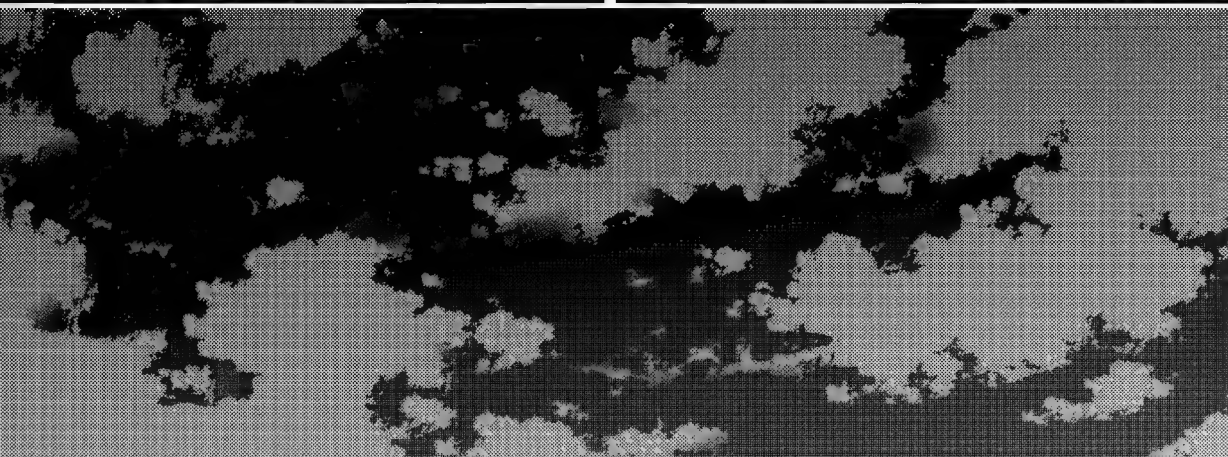
AT THIS
POINT IN TIME,
HIS DESCRIP-
TIVE AND
COMPOSITION
SKILLS MIGHT
NOT SURPASS
YOURS,



...HE
COULD END
UP GIVING
YOU A RUN
FOR YOUR
MONEY.



THERE'S
A CHANCE
...







I SEE.
HONESTLY,
I DON'T
THINK IT'S
UP TO PAR.

I
HAVEN'T
SHOWN
HIM
YET...

THE
PACING IS
PRETTY
FLAT.

WHAT DID
TSUTAYA-
SAN HAVE
TO SAY?

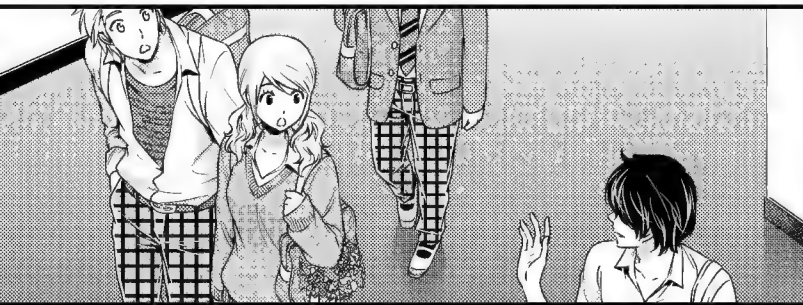


HMM.



FRANKLY,
THE WEEKLY
SHORT
STORIES
YOU DID
WERE
BETTER
WRITTEN.

HAVING READ
FROM START
TO FINISH,
I'M STILL NOT
SURE WHAT
YOU WERE
TRYING TO
EXPRESS WITH
THIS PIECE.





STILL
WORK-
ING?

YEAH.

I FIGURE
I'LL KEEP
AT IT UNTIL I
MAKE SOME
PROGRESS
SINCE TO-
MORROW'S
SATURDAY.



OH...
I'M GOOD.
I'LL JUST
TAKE A
SHOWER
IN THE
MORNING.

THE
BATH'S
FREE.

OKAY.

KNOCK
ノック
ノック
ノック



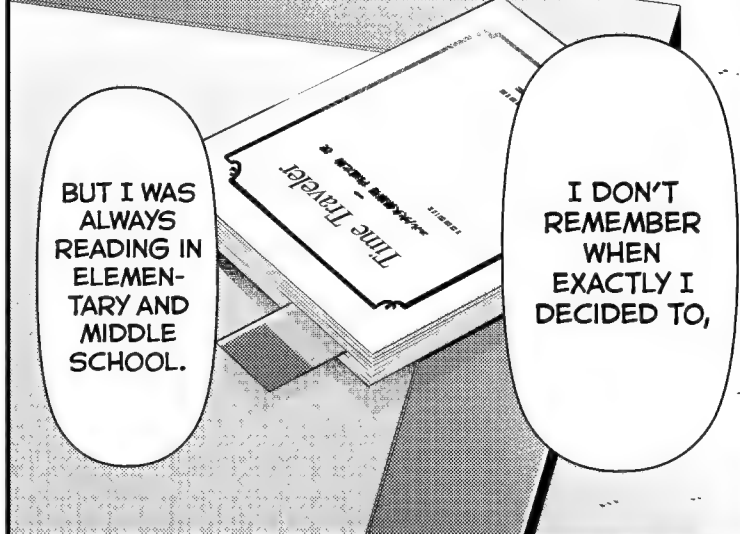
IN
THAT
CASE,

WHY
DON'T
YOU
TAKE A
BREAK?

MOM
BROUGHT
HOME
SNACKS.











I STOPPED DWELLING ON THE FACT THAT SHE WAS GONE AND THAT I WAS LONELY.

EVEN THOUGH ALL I COULD THINK ABOUT MOST OF THE TIME WAS HOW MY MOM WAS DEAD,

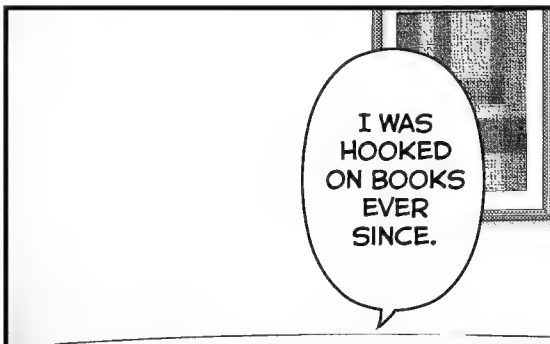
WHEN I WAS READING, I WAS COMPLETELY ABSORBED BY THE WORLD INSIDE THE BOOK.

WHEN I HAD MY NOSE IN A BOOK, THOSE THOUGHTS JUST VANISHED.



JUST HOW BOOKS SAVED ME WHEN I WAS LITTLE,

EVENTUALLY, I STARTED DREAMING ABOUT CREATING WORLDS LIKE THE ONES I'D READ.



I WAS HOOKED ON BOOKS EVER SINCE.



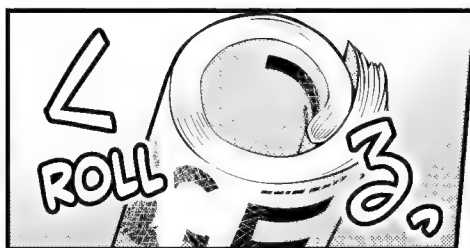
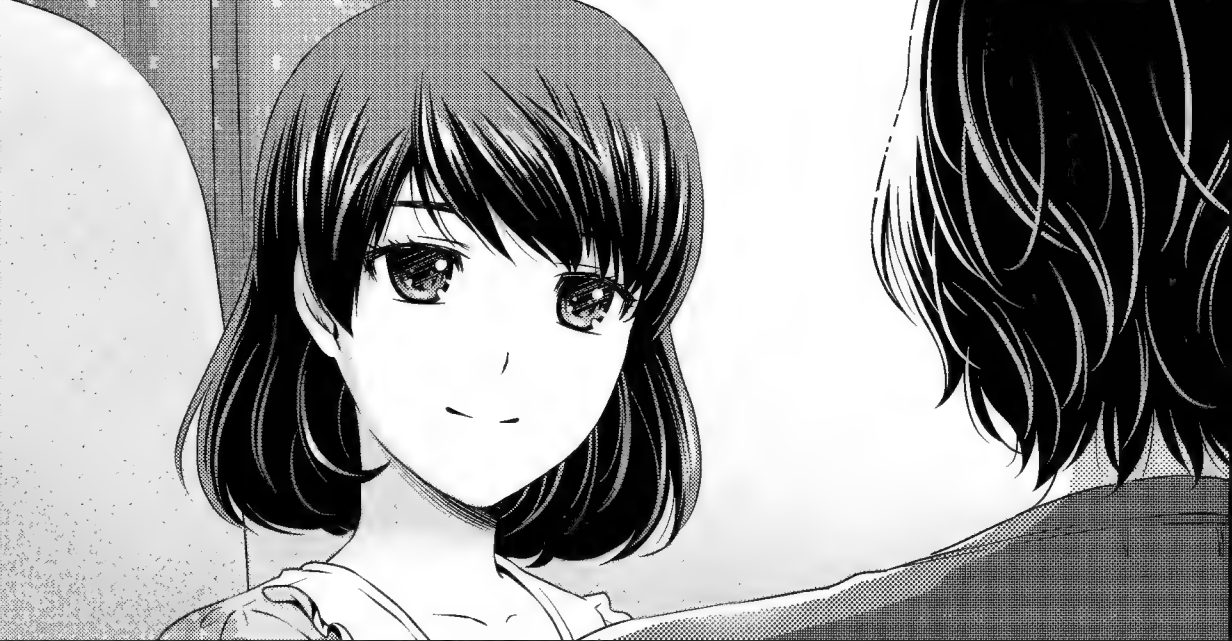
I HOPED THAT...

...I COULD PASS ON THAT JOY TO SOMEONE ELSE SOMEDAY, TOO.



I LOVED HOW THEY COULD SURPRISE ME ONE MOMENT, THEN GRAB ME BY THE HEART ANOTHER.

I WAS SO IMMERSED IN BOOKS THAT I THOUGHT WORDS MIGHT START LEAKING OUT OF MY EARS.







YOUR
OBSERVATION
SKILLS MUST
BE PRETTY
BAD IF YOU
COULDN'T
TELL WHERE
WE WERE
GOING FROM
MY CLOTHES.

WHO'D
EXPECT TO
HIKE UP A
MOUNTAIN
JUST FOR
DESSERT?!

HANG
ON A
SEC...

WHEN YOU
ASKED ME TO
GO WITH YOU,
I FIGURED
YOU MEANT
SOMEWHERE
CLOSE, LIKE
A LOCAL
CAFÉ...



HEY
...



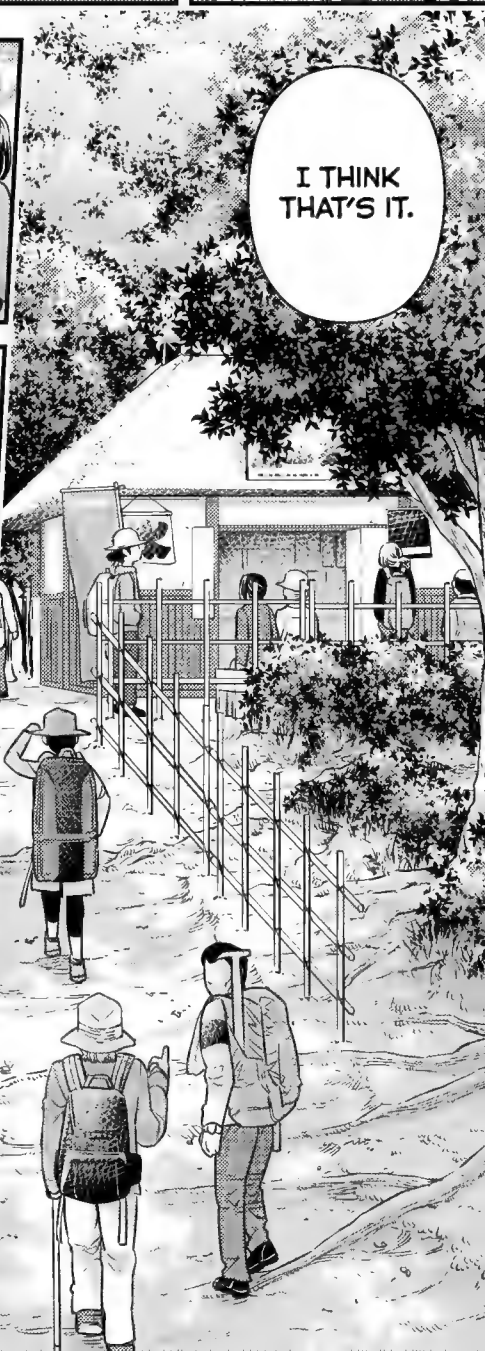
IF I'M
RIGHT,
THEN
SHUT
UP AND
WALK!

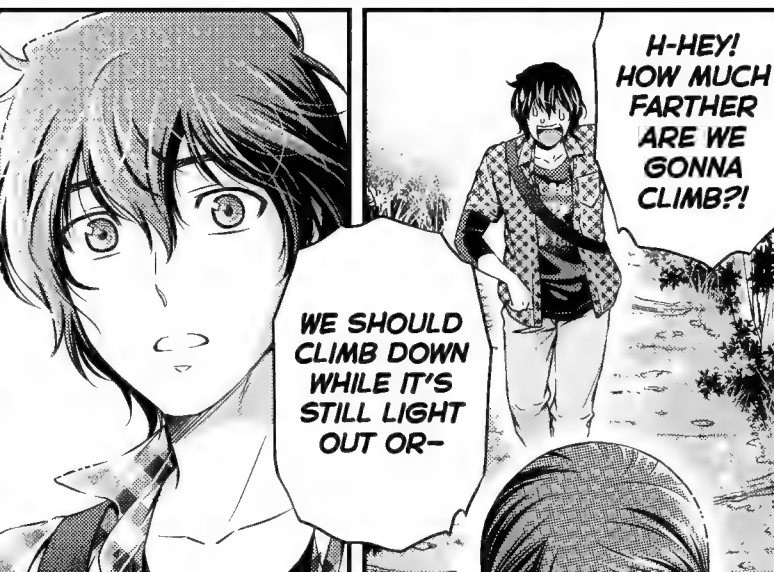


PRETTY
SURE ALL
THOSE
PAGES
YOU WERE
WRITING
WERE
GOING
STRAIGHT
INTO THE
TRASH.



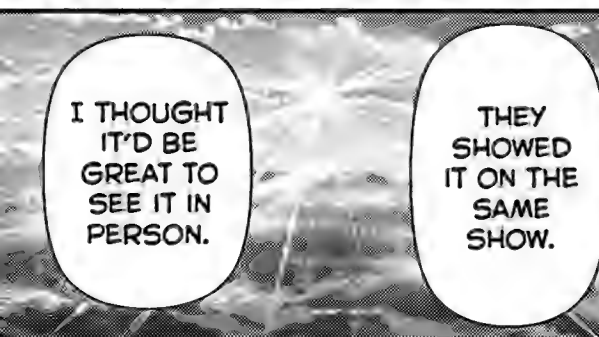
MAAAN...
HOW MANY
PAGES
COULD
I HAVE
GOTTEN
DONE BY
NOW?







I WANTED
YOU TO
SEE THIS
VIEW.



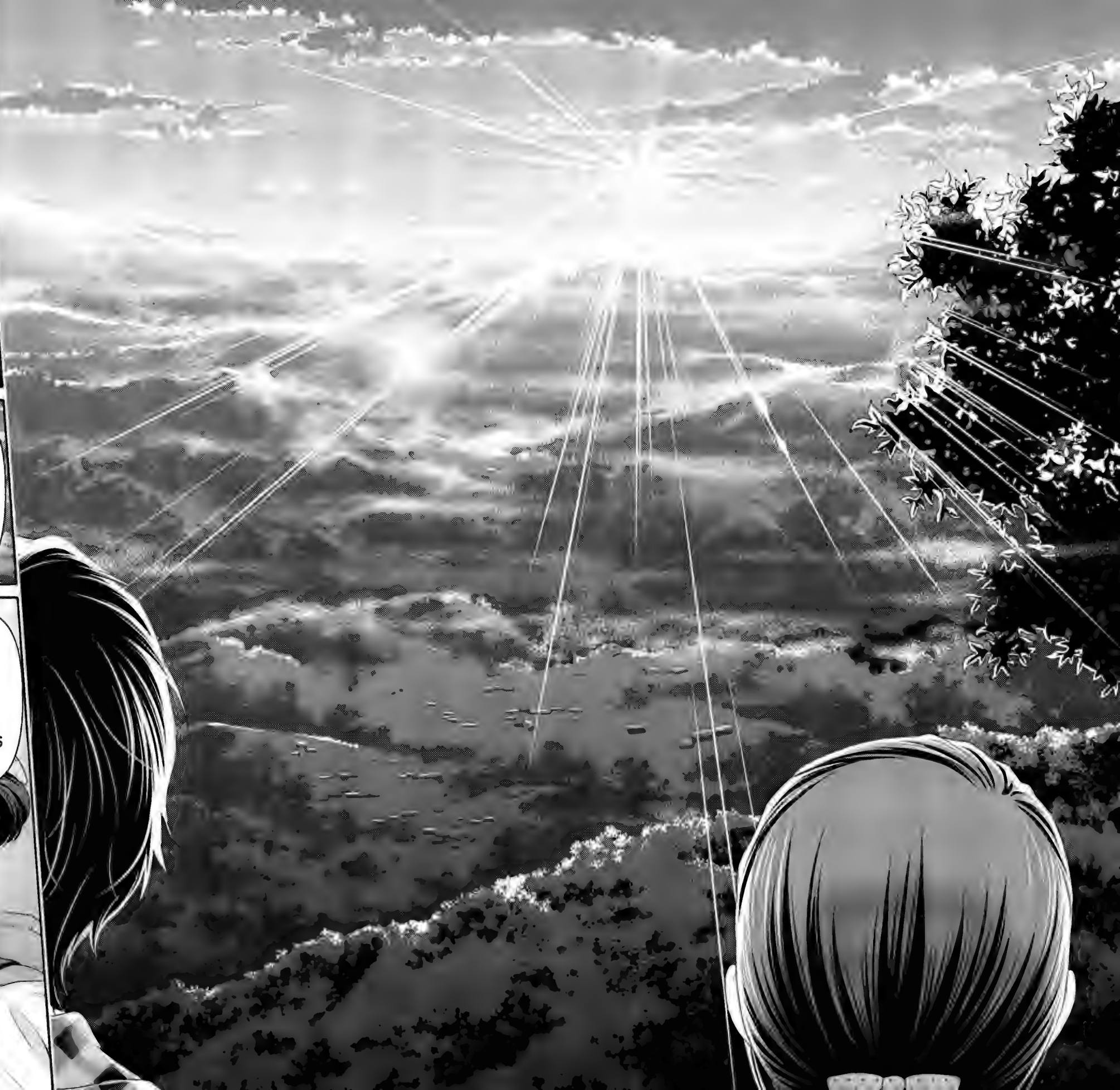
I THOUGHT
IT'D BE
GREAT TO
SEE IT IN
PERSON.

THEY
SHOWED
IT ON THE
SAME
SHOW.



NO MATTER
WHAT KIND OF
CONTENT A
NOVEL HAS,
WHAT'S MOST
IMPORTANT IS
THAT IT MOVES
YOU, RIGHT?

ISN'T THAT
WHAT MADE
YOU FALL IN
LOVE WITH
BOOKS?

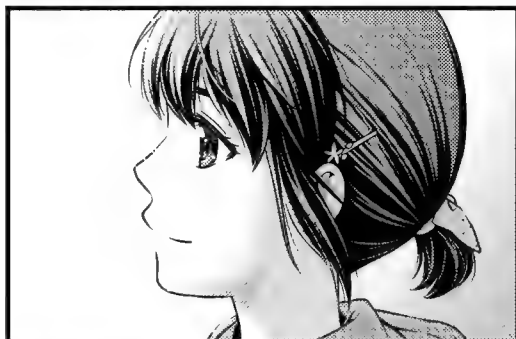




YOU'LL NEVER PULL YOURSELF OUT OF A RUT IF YOU STAY HUNCHED OVER YOUR DESK ALL THE TIME.

YOU HAVE TO FIND WHAT MOVES YOU...

IF YOU WANT TO INSTILL THE SAME FEELING IN OTHERS.



RUI-CHAN'S ALWAYS THE ONE WHO PICKS YOU UP WHEN YOU FALL.

Y'KNOW,

SHE REALLY IS.

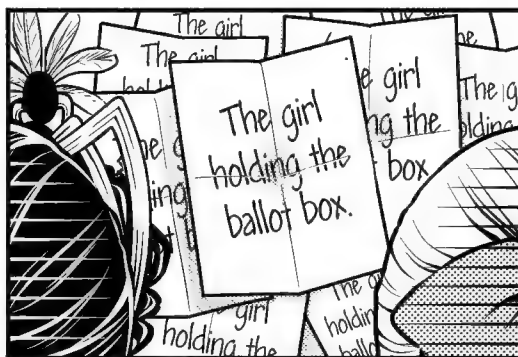
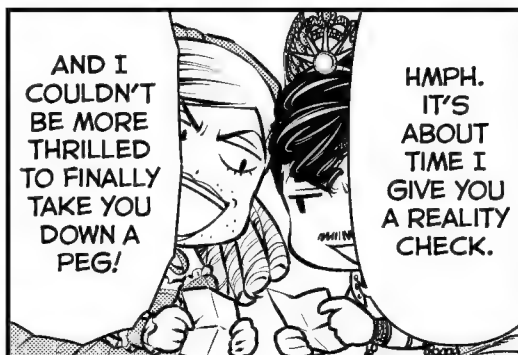
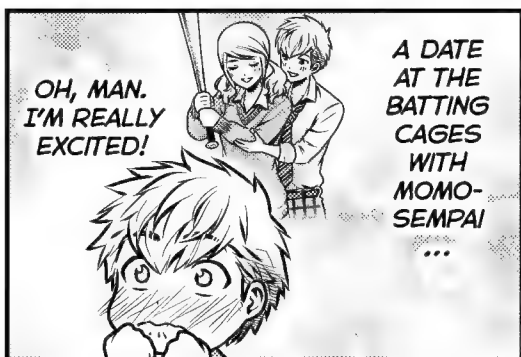


YEAH...



CHAPTER 83: UNCOVERED FEELINGS

DOMEGIRL 4-PANEL THEATER

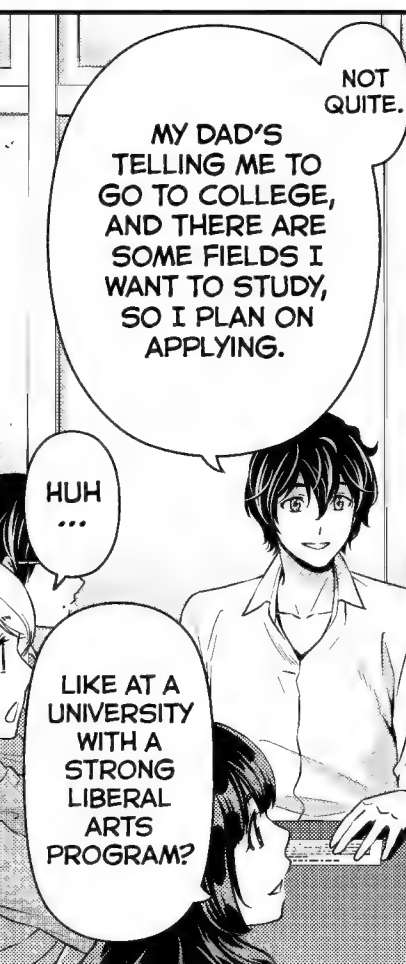




...REALLY DRIVES HOME THE FACT THAT WE'LL BE TAKING ENTRANCE EXAMS SOON, HUH?

GETTING THIS FORM...

Post-Graduation Prospects			
Year — Class — Name		Department	Subject
Preference	Name of School		
FIRST			
SECOND			
THIRD			





BUT I
THINK...

I'LL GIVE
UP ON BE-
COMING A
NOVELIST.

YEAH. I'VE
LOOKED
INTO A
BUNCH OF
PLACES,

YOU'RE
GOING THE
NOVELIST
ROUTE,
TOO, RIGHT,
ASHIHARA-SAN?
GOT ANY
SCHOOLS
IN MIND?

I GUESS
SO, BUT I
HAVEN'T
NARROWED
DOWN
WHERE
EXACTLY
YET.



WHY?! YOU
ALREADY
WROTE SO
MUCH!



HUH
?



YOU
MEAN
LIKE AN
EDITOR
?

SUP-
PORT
?

YEAH.

THAT'S
A GREAT
IDEA!



I FIGURE
IF THERE
ARE PEOPLE
OUT THERE
WHO CAN
WRITE MORE
INTERESTING
STORIES
THAN ME,

THEN I'D
LIKE TO
WORK TO
SUPPORT
THEM.



YOU
KNOW HOW
FUJII-KUN
WON THE
LITERARY
AWARD IN
FEBRUARY?

READING
HIS PIECE,
I REALIZED
I FELT
WAY MORE
MOVED THAN
FRUSTRATED.

I FELT
THE SAME
WAY DURING
HIS AND
SHIBASAKI-
KUN'S
MATCH.



IT'S
SO COOL
THAT YOU
GUYS ARE
MARCHING
TOWARD
YOUR
DREAMS.
♥

HOW
NICE.

DO YOU
HAVE ANY
CAREERS
IN MIND,
MOMO?



I STILL
PLAN TO
WRITE AS
A HOBBY,
ANYWAY.

OH, I SAID
IT WAS YOUR
AWARD THAT
MADE ME
DECIDE, BUT
DON'T FEEL
RESPONSIBLE,
OKAY?

IF ANY-
THING, I'M
THANKFUL
THAT YOU
HELPED
OPEN MY
EYES.



HUH?
SEMPAI'S
ACTUALLY
A GOOD
STUDENT
?!

YOU COULD
PROBABLY GET
INTO A GOOD
UNIVERSITY
WITH YOUR
GRADES,
KASHIWABARA-
SAN.

WHAT'S
WITH
THAT
REACTION?

BAD
BAR-
USU!



SNUGGLE♥

IS THAT
A JOB?

THEN
MAYBE
A WIFE?

HMM. IF I
HAVE TO
CHOOSE,

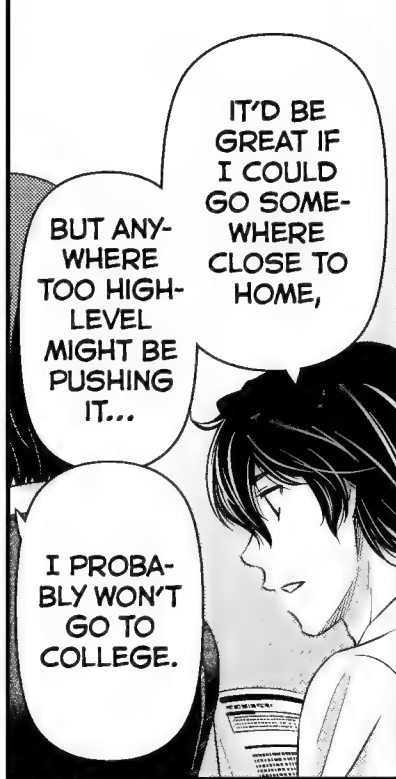


PEOPLE
ALWAYS
TELL ME I
LOOK LIKE
I'D WORK AT
A HOSTESS
CLUB.

D-D-
DOCTOR
MOMO...

HOW
ABOUT
BECOM-
ING A
DOCTOR
?

YOU'RE
EASYGOING
AND HAVE
GOOD
INTUITION,
SO MAYBE
YOU'D MAKE
A GOOD
RESEARCH-
ER?



BUT ANY-
WHERE
TOO HIGH-
LEVEL
MIGHT BE
PUSHING
IT...

I PROBA-
BLY WON'T
GO TO
COLLEGE.

IT'D BE
GREAT IF
I COULD
GO SOME-
WHERE
CLOSE TO
HOME,



WHERE
YOU'RE
GOING TO
COLLEGE.

I NEVER
EVEN
THOUGHT
ABOUT
MAJORS
AND STUFF
LIKE THAT.



HM?

OH, YEAH.
HAVE YOU
DECIDED
YET?



AND IT'S
NOT LIKE
EVERY JOB
OUT THERE
REQUIRES A
DEGREE.

I MEAN,
THERE ISN'T
REALLY
ANYTHING
I WANT TO
STUDY AT
COLLEGE.



I'M
THINKING
ABOUT IT,
ANYWAY.

SO,
YOU'RE
GOING
TO START
WORKING
AS SOON
AS YOU
GRADU-
ATE HIGH
SCHOOL
?



WHY
NOT
?!

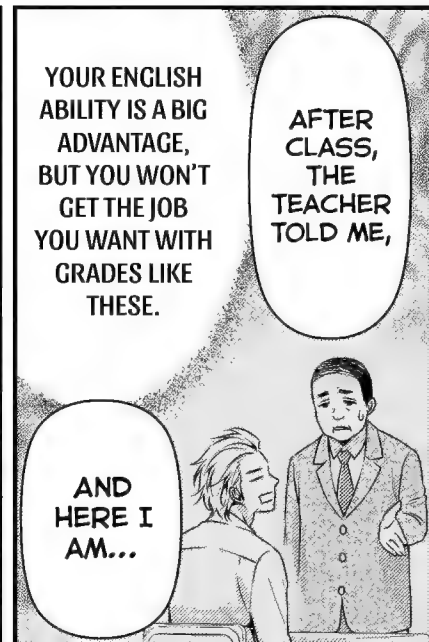
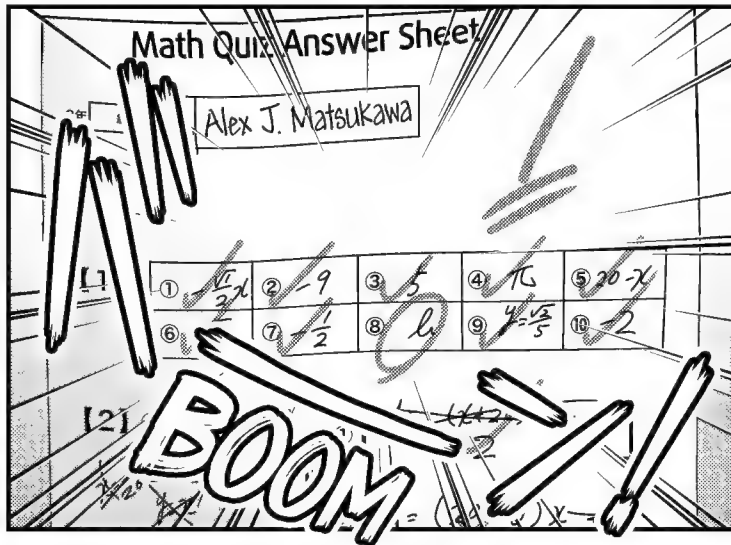
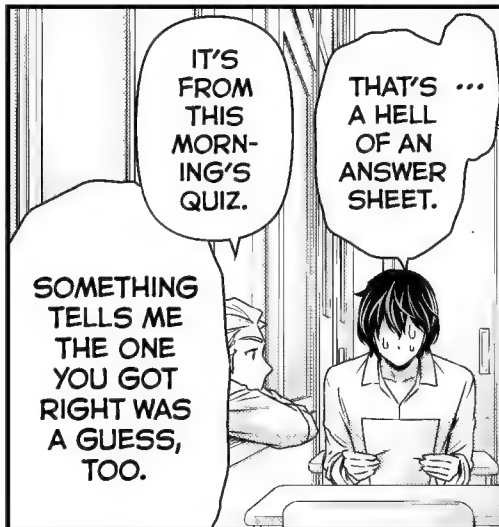
HUH
?!

YOU
WON'T...?
WHA?
HUH...?

YOU'RE
OVERRE-
ACTING.

COLLEGE GUIDE 2017
UNIVERSITIES • VOCATIONAL • GRADUATE





SATUR-
DAY



ISN'T IT
KINDA
EARLY?

UHH...
IT'S ONLY
SEVEN,
Y'KNOW.

I NEED
HELP WITH
A LOT OF
SUBJECTS.

CHEMISTRY,
CLASSICS,
PHYSICS,
POLITICS AND
ECON, WORLD
HISTORY...

WHAT
WERE
THEY
AGAIN?
MATH,
JAPA-
NESE,
AND
...?

THAT'S
EVERYTHING
EXCEPT
ENGLISH!

HOWDY!

ARE YOU
NATSUO'S
FRIEND?
WELCOME.

OH!

THANKS
FOR
HAVING
ME.

I DON'T
HAVE A
TABLE IN
MY ROOM,
SO LET'S
SET UP IN
THE LIVING
ROOM.





MORN-
ING...

MORN-
ING!

WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING
HERE,
AL?

MIDTERMS
ARE LOOK-
ING GRIM,
SO HE
BEGGED ME
TO TUTOR
HIM.



**RUI-
CHAN!**



UH
...
O K A Y

YOU CAN
CHECK
PAGE
126 OF
VOLUME
SIX FOR
DETAILS!

NAT-CHAN
TOLD ME
YOU GUYS
ARE STEP-
SIBLINGS.

UH-
HUH!

WAIT, DID
YOU KNOW
WE'RE LIVING
TOGETHER?



I WAS GOING
TO START
THIS AFTER-
NOON, BUT
THE SOONER
THE BETTER.

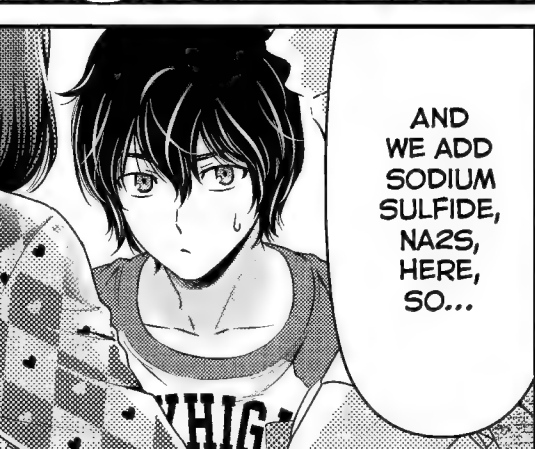
HMM.

I
GUESS
SO.



THE
MORE THE
MERRIER!

DO YOU
WANT TO
STUDY
WITH US,
RUI-CHAN?





I-I'M LISTENING!

REAL-
LY?

THEN
TRY
SOLVING
THIS
PROB-
LEM.



HEY, AL.
ARE YOU
LISTENING?

YOU'VE
JUST BEEN
STARING
AT RUI
THE WHOLE
TIME.



GLARING
AT IT WON'T
MAKE THE
ANSWER
APPEAR.



PHYSI-
CALLY,
I MEAN.

BY THE
WAY,
AREN'T
YOU GUYS
A LITTLE
CLOSE?

YOU
DON'T
HAVE TO
BE THAT
CLOSE
TO HEAR
HER,
RIGHT?



S-
SORRY.

JEEZ....
PAY
ATTEN-
TION.

OKAY,
WE'LL
START
AGAIN
FROM
THE TOP.



NAT-CHAN, DON'T TELL ME...

...



I'M ONLY TUTORING HIM BECAUSE YOU'RE BAD AT CHEMISTRY.

WHY DO YOU KEEP BUTTING IN?

IF YOU'RE JUST GOING TO COMPLAIN, THEN TEACH HIM YOURSELF.



NOT. EVEN. CLOSE!

I'M SORRY TO SNUB YOU.
IT'S HARD WORKING AS A TRIO.



...YOU'RE SAD BECAUSE YOU FEEL LEFT OUT!

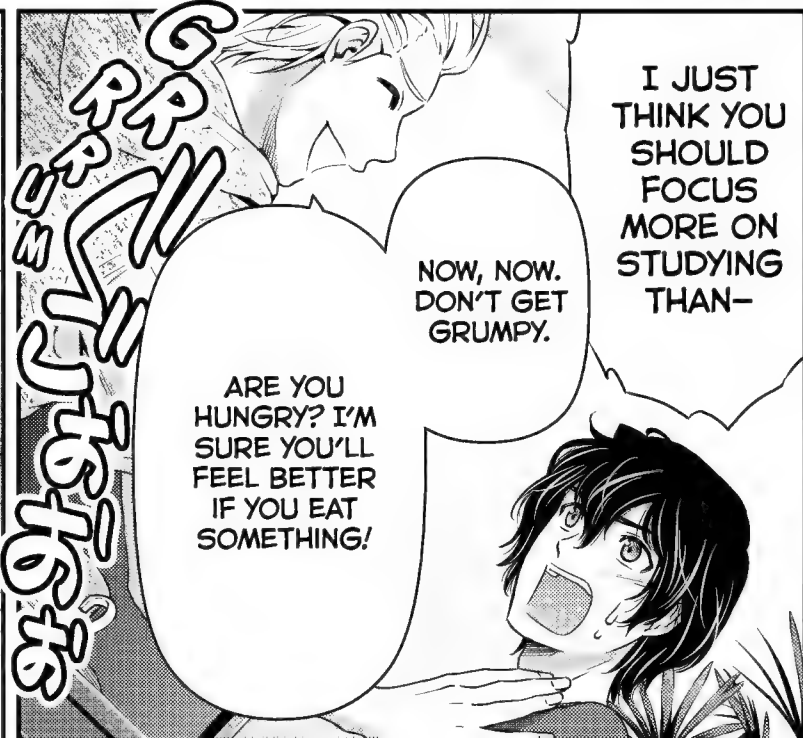


UH...

WHAT WAS THAT SOUND?

ACTUALLY,

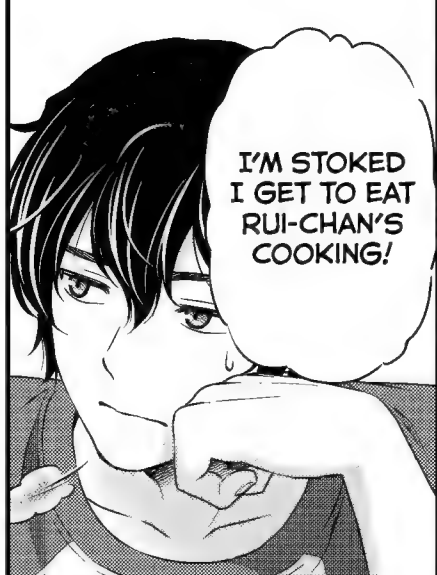
I'M STARVING, TOO...



I JUST THINK YOU SHOULD FOCUS MORE ON STUDYING THAN—

NOW, NOW. DON'T GET GRUMPY.

ARE YOU HUNGRY? I'M SURE YOU'LL FEEL BETTER IF YOU EAT SOMETHING!



I'M STOKED
I GET TO EAT
RUI-CHAN'S
COOKING!



YAY!

OH, WELL...
IT'S ALMOST
LUNCHTIME
ANYWAY. I'LL
WHIP UP
SOMETHING
SIMPLE.



Fan

Tas

tic!



HERE
YOU GO.



HEH,
HEH.
DON'T
CHOKE
NOW.

HAVING
SOMEONE
ENJOY MY
COOKING
THIS MUCH
MAKES IT
WORTH THE
EFFORT.



I'M
AMAZED
YOU CAN
MAKE
SOMETHING
LIKE THIS
IN NO
TIME!

AWESOME!
YOU'RE A
GENIUS!

THIS IS
GOOD,
RUI-CHAN!

SUPER
GOOD!



GINGER
PORK,
HAMBURG
STEAK,
SWEET AND
SOUR PORK.
STUFF LIKE
THAT.

RUI'S
GOOD AT
SEASONING
MEAT
DISHES.

THIS ISN'T
ENOUGH
TO GET AN
IDEA OF HER
SPECIALTY.



WELL,

SHE
MAKES
STUFF
THAT'S
EVEN
BETTER.



I'LL
FINISH
IT FOR
YOU.

I'M
GUESSING
YOU DON'T
LIKE THIS
THAT MUCH
THEN?

WHA
?!



FROWN

OH, YEAH?
I'D LIKE TO
TRY THEM
SOMETIME.



I NEVER
SAID I
DIDN'T
LIKE IT!

GIVE
IT
BACK,
YOU
HUNG
BLOND
TACKASS!

TOO
LATE,
ALL
GONE!



NOT TO MENTION
I GOT TO
STUDY WITH
RUI-CHAN
AND
EAT HER
COOKING!

I FEEL LIKE
TODAY GAVE
MY BRAIN A
BOOST!

THANKS A
MILLION,
NAT-CHAN!

I'M SO
HAPPY I
COULD DIE
TOMORROW
REGRET-
FREE!

YOU SURE?
THAT
DEFINITELY
DOESN'T
SOUND
SMART...

WOULDN'T
THAT MAKE
TODAY'S
STUDY
SESSION
POINTLESS?

NO
WOR-
RIES!



WHAT
EX-
ACTLY
...

...DO
YOU LIKE
ABOUT
HER,
ANYWAY?



HEY,

AL
...



...

SKYHI

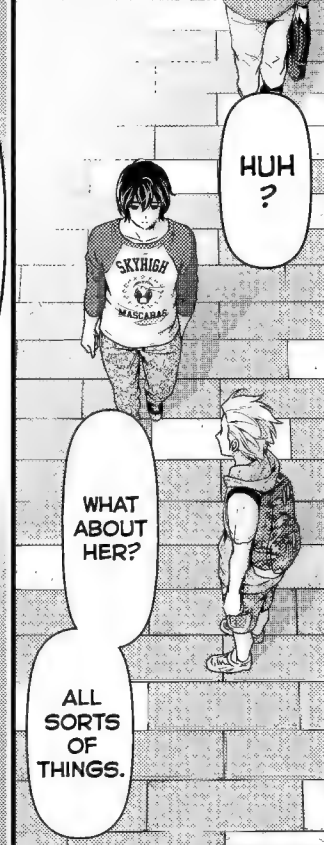


BUT
THINGS
LIKE HER
KIND-
NESS,

HER
INTELLI-
GENCE,

I MEAN,
IT WAS
LOVE AT
FIRST
SIGHT,

AND HER
COOKING
I GOT TO
TASTE
TODAY.



HUH
?

WHAT
ABOUT
HER?

ALL
SORTS
OF
THINGS.



...I FALL IN
LOVE WITH
HER MORE
AND MORE.

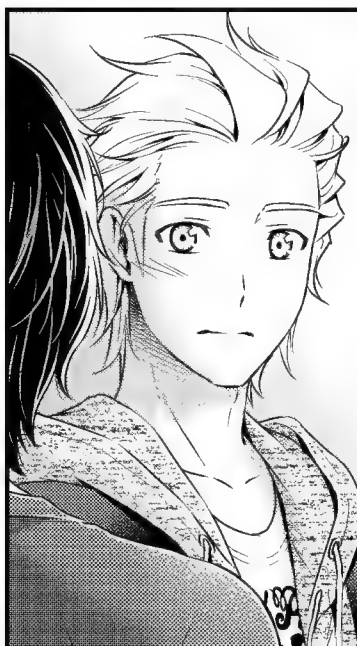
AND
GET TO
KNOW
HER
BETTER
...

EVERY TIME I
EXPERIENCE
A NEW SIDE
OF RUI-CHAN,



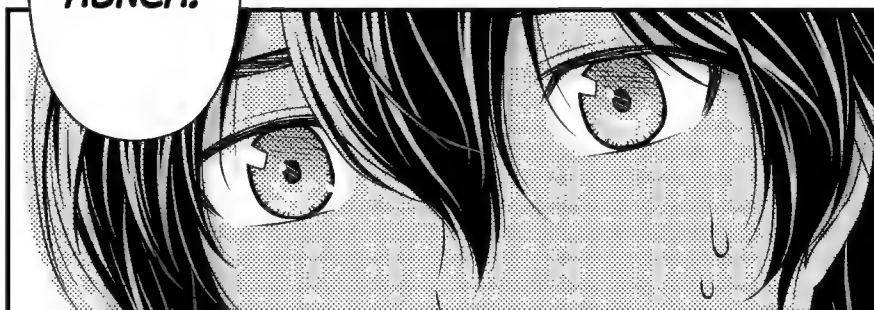
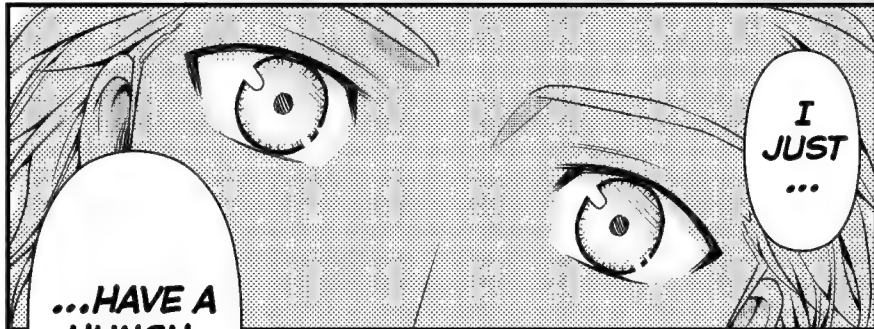
BY
THE
WAY,

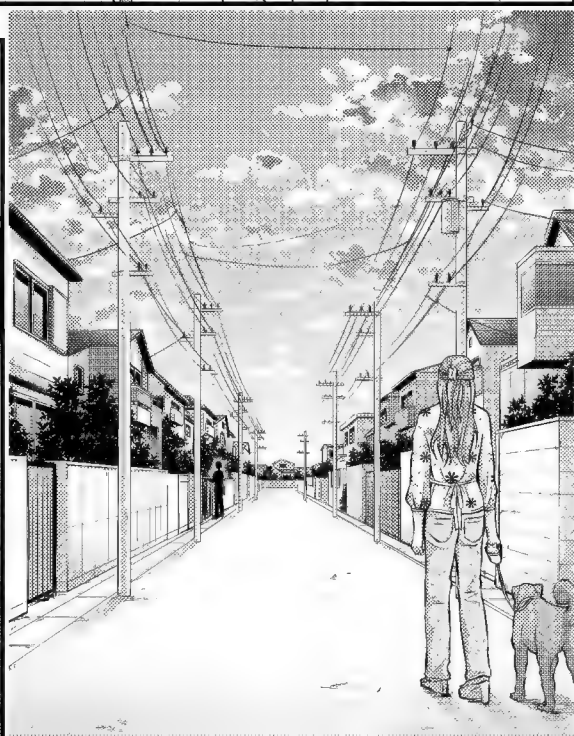
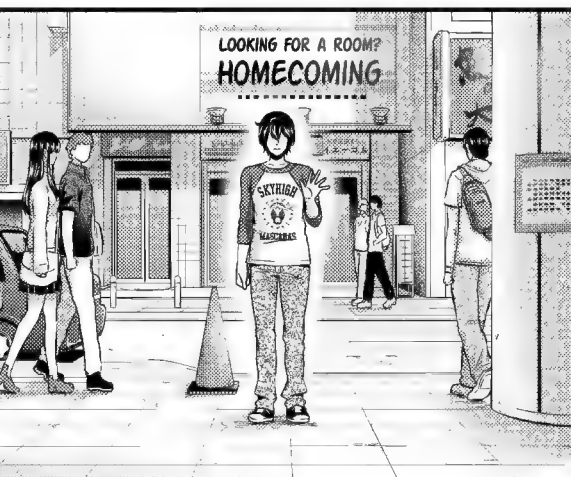
SOMETHING
CROSSED MY
MIND TODAY.



...

HMM.







SOMEONE
WANTED
HAMBURG
STEAK,

SO I'M
GETTING
THEM
READY.

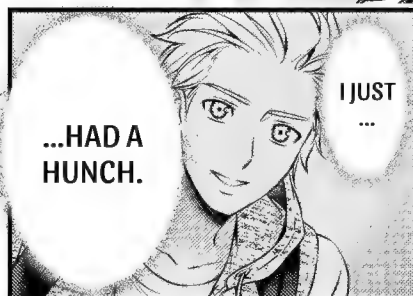
WHAT'S IT
LOOK LIKE?
MAKING
DINNER.



PLAP / 10

HUH?

WHAT'RE
YOU
DOING?



...HAD A
HUNCH.

I JUST
...



...



HUH?
SURE
...

IF YOU'RE
FREE, THEN
LEND ME
A HAND.



MAYBE.

NO,
DEFINITELY...

HE'S WRONG.

CHAPTER 84: SWEETHEART



IT WAS A
DISASTER
AND I
ENDED UP
BOTH
REJECTED
AND
FRIENDLESS.

I HAD A
CRUSH ON
MY BEST
FRIEND'S
GIRLFRIEND
IN MIDDLE
SCHOOL,
Y'SEE.

MAAAN.
I KNOW
HOW
THAT
GOES.

YOU'VE
EXPERIENCED
THAT KIND OF
DRAMA, TOO,
TSUTAYA-SAN?

YOUR
USE OF
METAPHORS
IS EXCELLENT
AND MAKES
IT EASY TO
SHARE HIS
PAIN.

TAKE THE
MOMENTS
WHERE THE
PROTAG-
ONIST'S
AMBIVALENCE
COMES INTO
PLAY, FOR
ONE.

THEN I
FEEL LIKE
I HAVE
TO ASK,
FUJII-
KUN.

IF YOU CAN
EXPRESS
THESE KINDS
OF FEELINGS
SO EASILY,

I'M
HOME.

COULD IT
BE YOU
HAVE A
CRUSH ON
SOMEONE
CLOSE TO
YOU?



WE
TALKED
ABOUT MAK-
ING SOME
TWEAKS AND
PUBLISHING
IT AS A
ONE-SHOT.

OH...
HE SAID IT
WAS A LOT
BETTER.

REAL-
LY?!



WEL-
COME
BACK.

HOW'D
HE LIKE
YOUR MANU-
SCRIPT?



HUH
?

Y-YEAH
...

I GUESS
THAT HIKE
HELPED PULL
YOU OUT OF
YOUR SLUMP,
AFTER ALL.



THAT'S
GREAT!

WAY
TO
GO!



MAYBE I
REALLY DO...



MAYBE IT'S
TRUE.



I WON'T
...

**NOT TO
MENTION...**

HOLD BACK
FOR HINA-NEE
ANYMORE.



I VOWED
TO BE
WITH HINA
FOREVER!

**HOW
LOW
CAN I
BE?!**

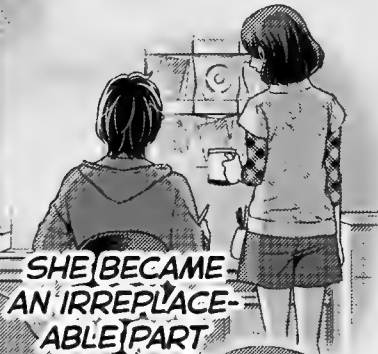
WHOA,
WHOA.
THAT
DOESN'T
MAKE IT
COOL TO
LET MYSELF
GET SIDE-
TRACKED!

EVEN
THOUGH
WE BROKE
UP...

BUT RUI'S
BEEN BY MY
SIDE EVER
SINCE HINA
LEFT.

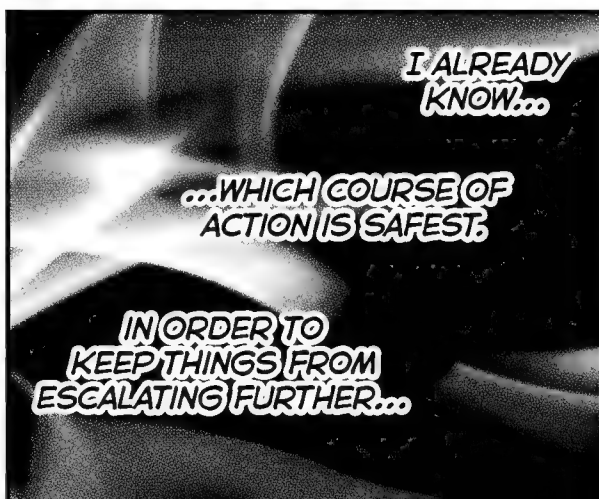


IT FEELS
DIFFERENT
FROM WHEN
I FELL IN
LOVE WITH
HINA,



SHE BECAME
AN IRREPLACE-
ABLE PART
OF MY LIFE
BEFORE I
REALIZED IT.



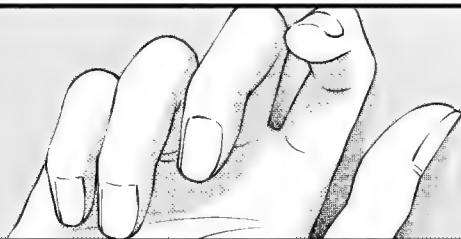


...AT ALL COSTS!

**...I HAVE TO
SUPPRESS THESE
FEELINGS...**



KNOCK



KNOCK

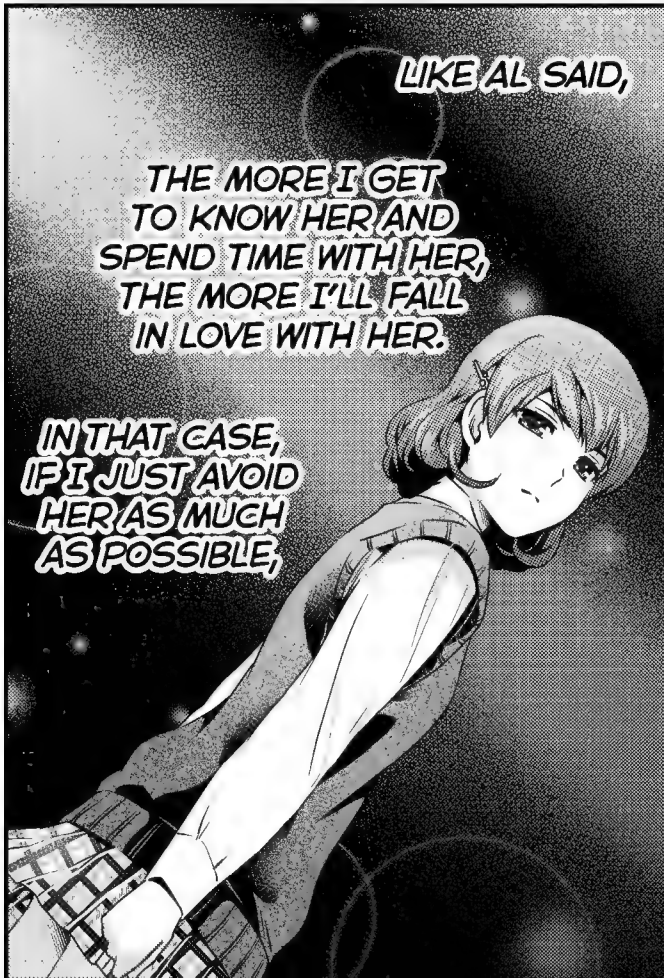
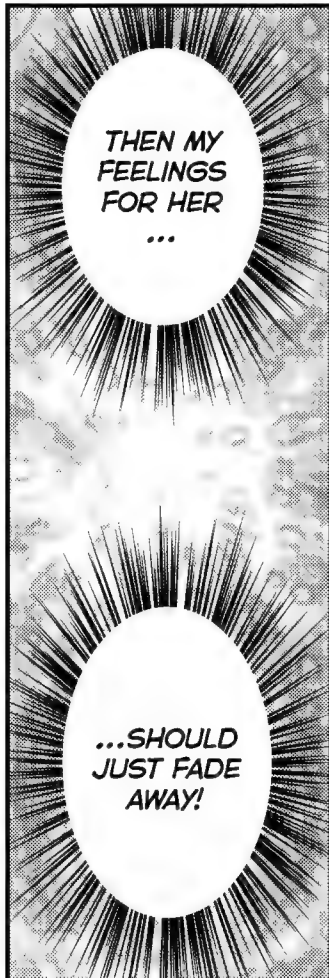
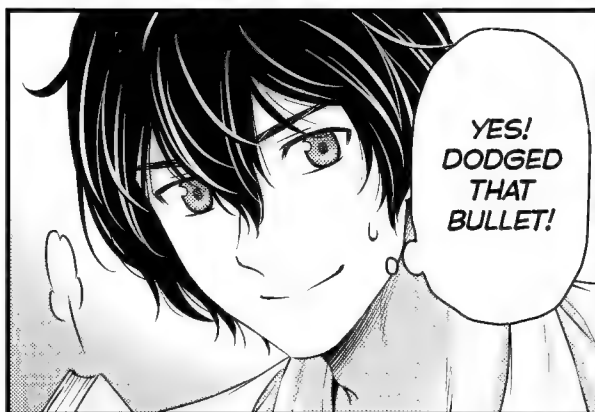
OH
...

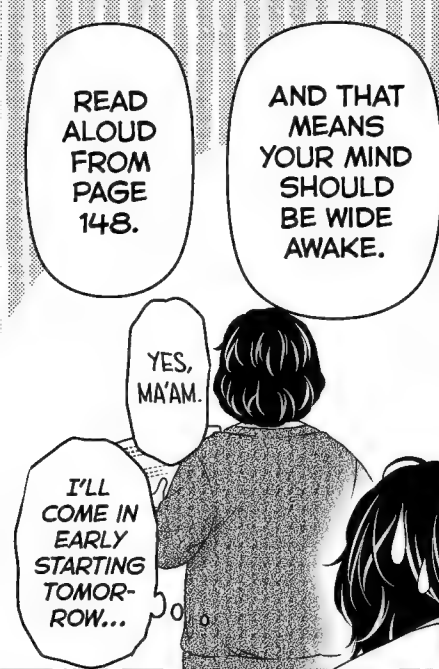
HURRY UP
OR WE'LL
BE LATE!

I WAS
UP LATE
TWEAKING
MY MANU-
SCRIPT...

IT'S
ALMOST
EIGHT.

HOW LONG
ARE YOU
GONNA STAY
IN BED?





READ
ALoud
FROM
PAGE
148.

AND THAT
MEANS
YOUR MIND
SHOULD
BE WIDE
AWAKE.

YES,
MA'AM.

I'LL
COME IN
EARLY
STARTING
TOMOR-
ROW...



I...
OVER-
SLEPT.

WHY
WERE
YOU LATE
TODAY?

OH, REALLY?
THEN I
GUESS YOU
GOT MORE
SLEEP THAN
EVERYONE
ELSE HERE.

FWUMP



OH!

THAT'S
RIGHT!



I'M
IN THE
GROOVE,
SO I'LL
HAVE
DINNER
LATER.



I HAVE
TO MEET
WITH MY
EDITOR
...



I'M ON
CLASS
DUTY THIS
WEEK, SO
I'M HEAD-
ING OUT
FIRST!



SORRY,
GO ON
HOME
WITHOUT
ME.

AL AND
I MADE
PLANS TO
GO TO
KARAOKE
TODAY!

HUH? WE
DIDN'T-

SHUT UP
AND COME
WITH ME!

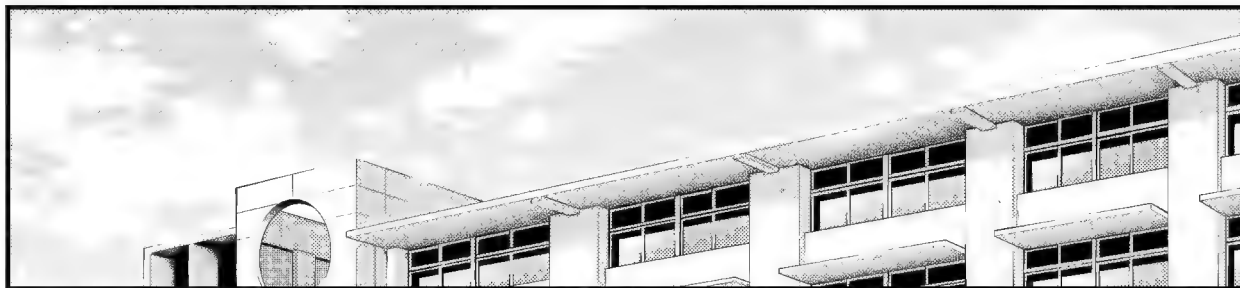


...BUT
I DON'T
REMEMBER
HIM BEING
THIS GUNG-
HO ABOUT
IT BEFORE.

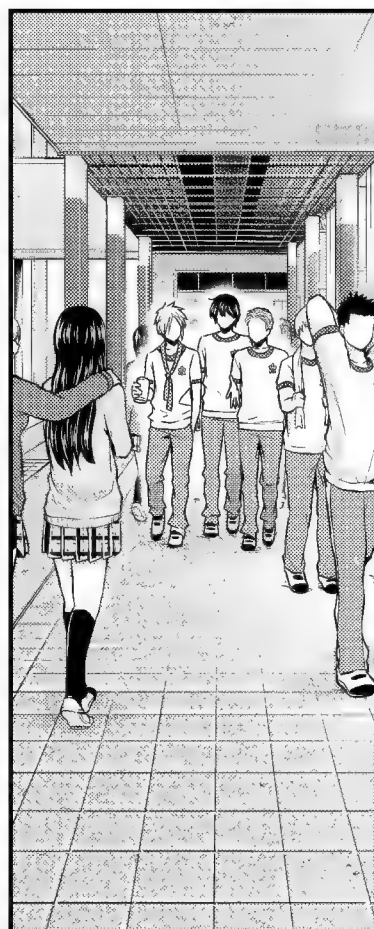


NATSUO-
KUN'S BEEN
LEAVING
RATHER
EARLY
LATELY.

HE DID
SAY
HE HAS
CLASS
DUTY...



NAT-
SUO!





STARE

...AVOIDING
ME LATELY?

HAVE
YOU
BEEN
...



I HAVE
TO SWITCH
CLASS-
ROOMS
NEXT
PERIOD,
SO I'M
KINDA IN
A HURRY.

GOT A
SEC?

WH-
WHAT'S
UP?

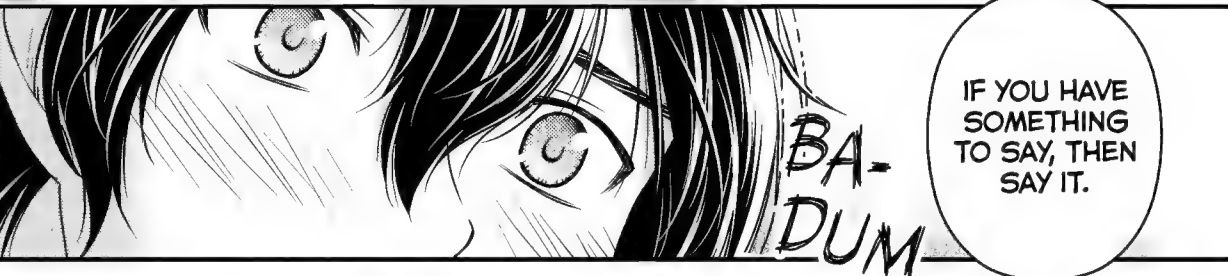


OH
...

FIRST,
TAKE
THIS.

YOU
FORGOT
YOUR
LUNCH.

ALSO,



BA-
DUM

IF YOU HAVE
SOMETHING
TO SAY, THEN
SAY IT.



I SAID
...

WHIP

...IT'S
NOTHING!



HANG ON!
WE'RE NOT
DONE YET!

GRAB

DID I DO
SOME-
THING
WRONG
?!

IF I DID,
THEN JUST
TELL ME!



YOU'RE
JUST IMAG-
INING
THINGS.

SEE
YA.



THIS ISN'T
THE FIRST
TIME. DID
YOU PEEP
ON ME
IN THE
BATHROOM
AGAIN?

I'M NOT
AVOIDING
YOU...

I
DIDN'T
LAST
TIME,
EITHER!

I
DIDN'T
PEEP!



AH
...



FINE,
THEN.

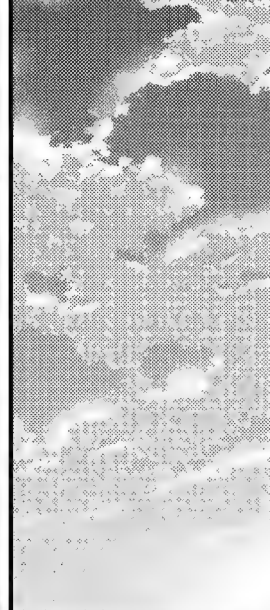
I
SEE.



IF YOU
HATE
ME THAT
MUCH,

THEN
SUIT
YOUR-
SELF!





DID SHE
TELL YOU
ANYTHING,
NATSUO-
KUN?

RUI-
CHAN
SURE IS
LATE.

SHE
HASN'T
CALLED,
EITHER.



IT'S
PAST
NINE
...



THAT
MIGHT
BE WHY
...

SHE
WASN'T
AT CLUB,
EITHER.

RUI AND
I KINDA
HAD A
FIGHT
TODAY.

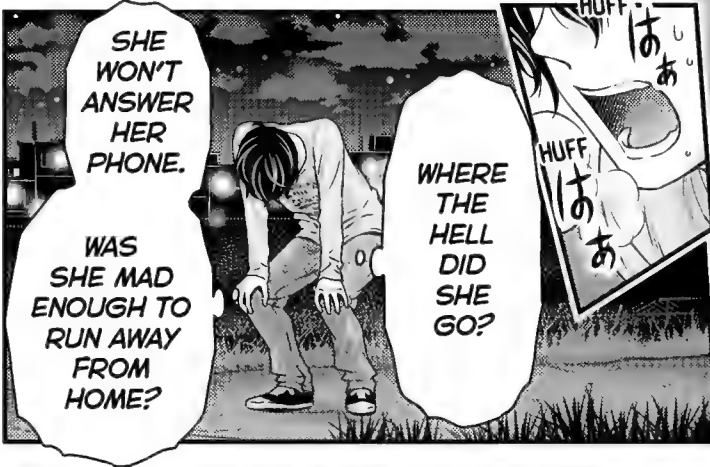
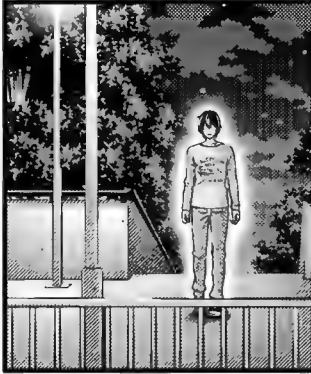


I'LL GO
LOOK FOR
HER!

DASH

A
FIGHT
?

HUH
?





I WAS
WAN-
DERING
AROUND
HERE
AFTER
SCHOOL,

AND
THE
NEXT
THING
I KNEW,
I WAS
MISSING
ONE.

...

I LOST
MY HAIR-
PIN.

THE
ONE
YOU
GAVE
ME.



IS THAT
ALL?



LEAVE IT.
I CAN JUST
BUY YOU
ANOTHER
ONE.

NO!

C'MON,
LET'S
GO-



WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING
HERE?

DO YOU
HAVE ANY
IDEA WHAT
TIME IT IS?



...

I WAS
HAPPY...



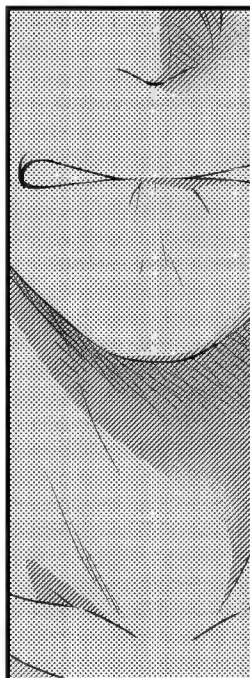
WHY...?



HUH
?!

I DON'T
WANT
ANOTHER
ONE!

THERE'S NO
POINT IF IT
ISN'T THE
ONE YOU
GAVE ME!





...ANY
MORE
CONFLICT-
ED THAN I
ALREADY
AM!

DON'T
MAKE
ME...



GRIP
...
4





...to be continued.

EXTRA MANGA SWEET HOME MAGIC

★ THE STORY SO FAR ★

A MYSTERIOUS DRUG HAS TURNED
RUI AND HINA INTO CHILDREN. AT A LOSS,
NATSUO TURNS TO KIRIYA FOR HELP...

"YASUE
HUNG HER
HEAD AS
THE WORDS
TUMBLLED
FROM HER
LIPS."

"IT'S NOT
ALL YOUR
FAULT."

CUT ME
SOME
SLACK.
I DON'T
OWN ANY
KIDS' BOOKS.

IMPROVISE
SOME-
THING.
YOU'RE A
WRITER,
AREN'T
YOU?

"UNABLE TO
MUSTER THE
COURAGE
TO SO MUCH
AS LOOK AT
HER FACE."

"HEARING
THAT,
RYOSUKE
QUIETLY
MADE
FOR THE
DOOR,"

TO THINK
THAT THIS
CHILD IS
TACHI-
BANA-
SENSEI.

ARE YOU
SURE
YOU'RE
NOT PULL-
ING MY
LEG?

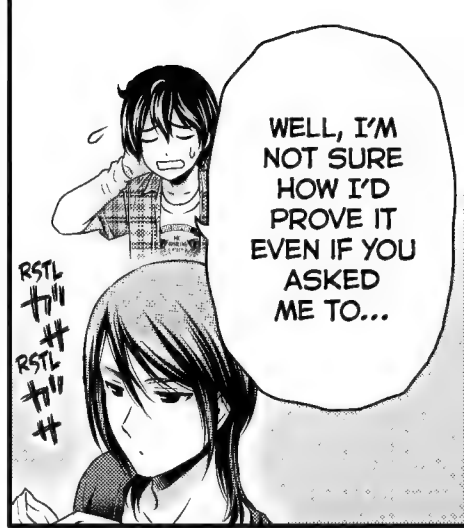
STARE...

WHAT ARE
YOU READ-
ING TO
CHILDREN?



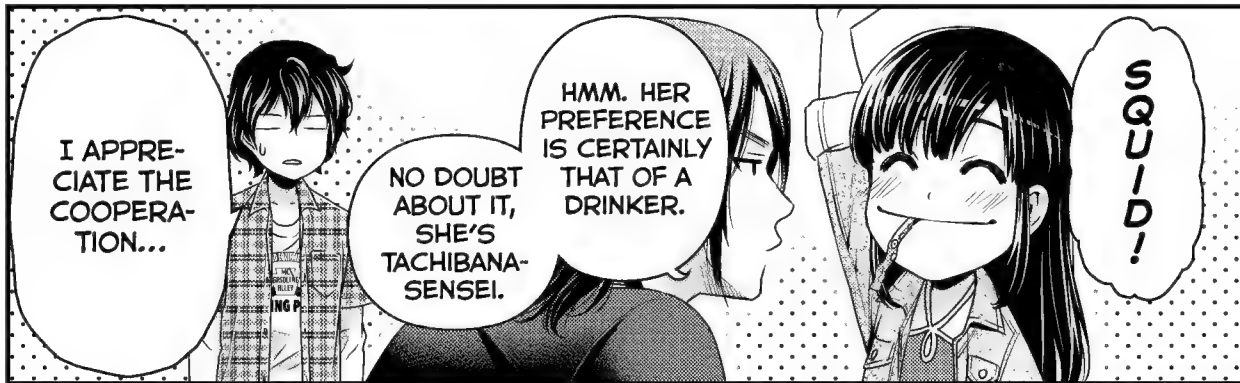
WHICH DO YOU LIKE MORE?

CHOCOLATE, OR DRIED SQUID.



WELL, I'M NOT SURE HOW I'D PROVE IT EVEN IF YOU ASKED ME TO...

RSTL
THH
RSTL
THH

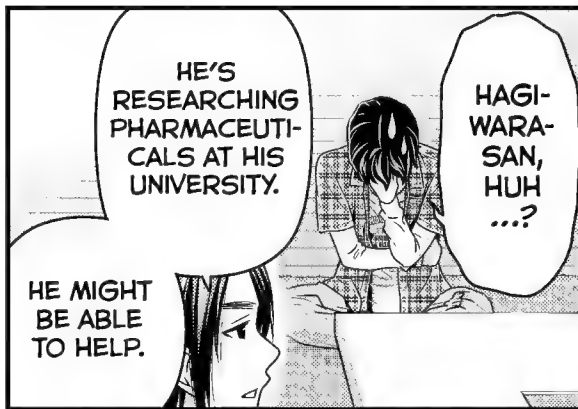


I APPRECIATE THE COOPERATION...

NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, SHE'S TACHIBANA-SENSEI.

HMM. HER PREFERENCE IS CERTAINLY THAT OF A DRINKER.

SQUID!



HE'S RESEARCHING PHARMACEUTICALS AT HIS UNIVERSITY.

HAGIWARA-SAN, HUH ...?

HE MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP.



REGARDLESS, EVEN IF THEY'VE REVERTED TO CHILDREN,

I'M AFRAID I HAVE NO MEANS OF TURNING THEM BACK.



YOU'RE NOT TAKING THEM WITH YOU?

CAN YOU LOOK AFTER THEM WHILE I'M GONE?

I'LL GO TALK TO HIM THEN.

YOU'D BE BETTER OFF ASKING HAGIWARA-KUN.



I DOUBT
HE'LL TRY
TO TAKE
HER FROM
YOU, BUT
ALL RIGHT.

I DON'T
THINK IT'S A
GOOD IDEA TO
LET HIM SEE
HER, EVEN IN
CHILD FORM...



ANYWAY,
I'LL BE
BACK
SOON...



OKAY
?

BE A
GOOD GIRL
AND STAY
HERE WITH
HINA.

I HAVE TO
STEP OUT
FOR A BIT.

RUI
...



IT SEEMS
YOU'LL JUST
HAVE TO SLIP
OUT WHEN
THEY'RE
ASLEEP...

WAAAAH



I'LL
PLAY
WITH
YOU
UNTIL
YOU
DROP!

GAAAH,
FINE!
HAVE IT
YOUR
WAY!



NOOO!

I DON'T
WANT YOU
TO GOO!



THEY'RE OUT, RIGHT?

OKAY.



PCAW

PCAW

PCAW



I'LL TRY.

I-



PLEASE MAKE IT BACK BEFORE THEY WAKE UP.

I'LL BE BACK LATER.



BE A GOOD GIRL AND STAY PUT, PLEASE. OKAY?

I HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF SOMETHING. UP ALREADY?



OKAY.

SEE YOU LATER.

...



NOT HAPPENING.

TO BE CONTINUED

STILL?!/u

FOR NOW, WOULD YOU LET ME TAKE A LOOK AT THEM?



UNIVERSITY

HINA-CHAN AND RUI-SAN HAVE TURNED INTO CHILDREN?!



!

HI-

HINA!

TRANSLATION NOTES



BARUSU, PAGE 51

"Barusu" ("Balse" in the English dub) is the incantation used to destroy the flying castle Laputa in the Studio Ghibli film *Castle in the Sky*. The spelling was kept as "barusu" so that it still functioned as an anagram of Subaru.



FUMIN & BATH ROMAN, PAGE 51

Fumie Hosokawa, also known as Fumin, is a Japanese entertainer who was featured in a long line of commercials for the Bath Roman brand of bath products between 1996-2005.

Domestic Girlfriend 9

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

Domestic Girlfriend volume 9 copyright © 2016 Kei Sasuga
English translation copyright © 2017 Kei Sasuga

All rights reserved.

First published in Japan in 2016 by Kodansha Ltd., Tokyo.
Electronic Publishing rights for this English edition arranged through
Kodansha Ltd., Tokyo.

No portion of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or
by any means without written permission from the copyright holders.

English digital edition published by Kodansha Advanced Media, LLC,
San Francisco.

www.kodanshacomics.com

ISBN: 9781682338896

Digital Edition: 1.0.0

Translation by Adam Hirsch
Lettering by Daniel Park
Editing by Sarah Tilson
YKS Services LLC/SKY Japan, INC.

